



THREE
LETTERS
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFSSIONAL.



LETTERS

TO THE

AUTHOR

CONFIDENTIAL



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THREE
LETTERS
By J. G. Ridley.
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFESSIONAL.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and
with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom. x. 10.



LONDON:

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M.DCC.LXVIII,

THE
L E T T E R S
TO THE
A U T H O R
OF THE
CONFESSIO N A L

For with the heart man is made righteous, and
with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
Rom. x. 10.



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LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

CONFESSIO:

CONTAINING

REMARKS

ON HIS

PRELACE



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MDCCLXXIII.

LETTER
TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFESSIONAL.

REVEREND SIR,

AS your name is not prefixed to your book, mine will not be subjoined to this letter. I shall not curiously inquire into what you desire to keep secret: but as I think you have given the world to understand, from many passages in the Confessional, that you are a clergyman preferred in the church of England, I take the liberty of applying to you as such. If you are possessed of any further title of dignity, your concealment of it must be my excuse for not giving it to you. I have all the respect for you, which is due to your learning and abilities: and I am desirous to pay you all the regards that are owing to your person, as well as your office. For I bear you sincerely christian good-will: and mean to give a testimony of it, by *withstanding you to the face* with honest freedom, where *you are to be blamed.*

B

When

When you entered into holy orders, you declared, ~~on being solemnly asked in the name of~~ "God," that "you thought in your heart that you were truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the order of this church of England, to the order and ministry of priesthood."—"That you would minister with faithful diligence the doctrine, and sacraments, and discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this church and realm hath received the same."—"That you would reverently obey your ordinary and other chief ministers, unto whom is committed the charge and government over you submitting yourself to their godly judgments."* And that you "did willingly and *ex animo* subscribe to these three articles, 1. That the King's majesty under God, is the only supreme governour of this realm, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes, as temporal. 2. That the book of common-prayer containeth in it nothing contrary to the word of God. 3. That you acknowledge all and every the articles contained in the book of articles of religion, being in number nine and thirty, to be agreeable to the word of God."† I presume you will not say, that your book is consistent with these declarations. Whence then proceeds the inconsistency? were you not in earnest when you made them? you talk indeed of *religious impositions in protestant societies, not warranted by scripture, which must be submitted to, on the pain of wanting bread.*‡ But there are in the church of England no unwarranted ones; nor any to which necessity enforces submission: for other professions and employments are

* Ordinat. office. † 36th Canon. ‡ Pref. p. xci. 2d. edit.

are open to those who scruple them: And no necessity can justify prevarication. But you, Sir, particularly seem not to have been under any, for you intimate,^a that you were *in a situation not to be affected by such alarming considerations*. You say also, *that men of liberal education, finding they cannot be completely qualified for certain publick stations, without complying with forms, of the rectitude of which they are not satisfied, and with which they must comply, or lose the expence as well as the fruits of their education, will therefore comply at all events*. Was this unwillingness then your motive? If it was, how much soever you may deserve pity, you deserve equal blame. But I do not charge you with this insincerity. Perhaps you have changed your notions: and do not now believe, or think it lawful to do, some things, which you then *ex animo* professed. But still it is incumbent on you seriously to consider, whether your present professions and behaviour, on some occasions, as a clergyman, are not contradictory to positions in your book; and likewise whether you may, with a good conscience, fill a station and receive the profits of it, without performing all the conditions on which you were admitted into it. If you are faulty in these respects, your readers must entertain a disadvantageous opinion of your character. But admitting your conduct to be ever so consistent with your supposed change of sentiments, it behoves you to reflect with as much impartiality as you possibly can, how far that change is real, and what have been the motives to it. You give a hint, and with good ground, concerning *talents vouchsafed*;^b you mention *an impatience in human nature to be figuring with eclat*;^c you say, that *persons of lively and active spirits not only are not easy un-*

B 2

der

^a P. xvii. ^b P. xcii. ^c P. ii. ^d P. iv.

der want of employment, but have sanguine hopes that fame, honors and rewards must crown their labors, and the publick acknowledge its obligations by the most substantial instances of its gratitude.^h When such tempers as these meet with disappointments, especially if a little envy or moroseness make part of their inward composition, they are very apt to revenge themselves upon the constitution under which they imagine they are slighted. Many have rebelled from this inducement against the state, and some may have rebelled against the church to which they belonged, and been vehement in their accusations of what inwardly they thought harmless enough. I do not suffer myself to believe this is your case. I am persuaded, that you really disapprove what you condemn. But then, whether you have been impartial in forming your judgment; whether you have let nothing entice or provoke you into rash determinations or hard censures; these are questions which it highly imports you to put home to yourself. For indeed appearances are grievously against you, not in my opinion alone, but perhaps in that of every serious and dispassionate man. It would give me the greatest joy if I could hope, that you would coolly go over your book along with me, and revise your sentiments and expressions. The business of a writer on grave and important subjects is, not to say the smartest things he can, to please his own party, to excite hatred or contempt of his adversaries, and mislead those whom he professes to inform: but to watch over himself, represent things candidly, argue justly, allow answers their just weight, and honestly confess his own mistakes and faults, when he has been guilty of any. These are strict duties: and would you but act thus, I should be proud of doing justice to your merit. But as you have

have not, and from your second edition I fear there is no likelihood that you will, your readers must be upon their guard, and give little credit to your accounts of persons and things, when they make for your purpose, unless they are sufficiently supported by reason or history.

A person of a bitter spirit and overweening disposition is ill qualified to be a reformer: yet it becomes us of the clergy, who wish the church to be *without spot or wrinkle*, as far as the fallible and peccable members that compose it, can be prevailed upon to make it so, to listen to every friend and every foe, to preserve it in being, and to provide for its well being. If alterations are necessary, they ought to be attempted at all adventures, as they were at the reformation: but then what, and how many, they are, ought to be specified. Nay, supposing them to be only convenient and useful, it will be right to make them, if they are likely to have considerable good effects, and no considerable bad ones; but this should be plainly shewn, and leave to make them modestly requested; and if it should happen that such request fail of success, in these points where essentials are not concerned, the disappointment should be born with meakness; and some improvement, more in our power, be attempted, though in a narrower sphere, by an irreproachable and christian example.

I shall therefore carefully attend to the opening of your plan, and candidly examine it: the extent of it I find is extremely large indeed; for in the course of your book and preface, it intends little less than the subversion of the whole church of England; your main attack in your book is against all her creeds and articles of religion; in your approaches, by mines and skirmishes, in the

preface, you recommend an almost total change of her government and discipline, according to *the millenary petition*; ¹ and so thorough an alteration in her worship, in every part and office of her liturgy, according to the objections of the *candid disquisitions*, and the *essay on spirit*, ² as, I think, would endanger as well the faith, as the peace of it.

Though your friends are desirous to have it thought, and you seem yourself now and then to intimate, that some very moderate concessions would satisfy you ; by this artifice you can with a better grace inveigh against others, as men determined to yield nothing, instead of appearing a man determined to overthrow every thing ; I would not bring a false charge against you : but I beg the reader to observe as he goes along, whether this be not a true one ; for the matter is of no small moment. Hence, by way of preparation to your general attack on her articles, you endeavour to spirit up your party by signifying your dissent from *the warmest friends of reformation, for shuddering at the temerity of endangering publick peace by attempts to innovate.* ¹ But though you yourself are above such fears, may there not be grounds for them ? you and your friends have plenty of innovations in doctrine, discipline, and worship, ready to propose : which, from the extent of your plan, would certainly be carried far enough to create vehement disputes, oppositions and disquietudes. And these disorders mixing and fermenting with the ill humours of the higher and lower ranks of men, relative to other matters, the fears of the clergy about losing their revenues, which you admit would be endangered by your reformation, and the eagerness of the laity in scrambling for them ; and the general dissatisfaction (for whatever you may fancy,

¹ P. xxvii. ² P. xxxvii. lxii. and xviii. ³ P. v.

fancy, such it would be) at many of the changes you would introduce, might easily bring all into a dreadful condition. But what were all the foreseen horrors of a civil war to Cæsar on the banks of the Rubicon? what the remonstrances of his affrighted country?

Si jure venitis,

Si cives, lucusque licet.

Pharf. lib. I.

If friends to right, if citizens of Rome,

Here to your utmost barrier are you come.

Rowe.

Tired with ambition and resentment he passes the boundaries beyond which no good citizen could go, and plunged his country into ruin. Our own has already experienced the miserable effects of such beginnings: which I pass over now with only this observation; that those who imprudently began the disturbance and snatched the bone from the first occupants, were forced to yield it up to be picked by their allies who turned against them. But be the event as it may: you encourage your friends with *the comfort that results from the testimony of having done their duty.*" But, Sir, you would do well to caution them that their conscience be first well instructed, or the comfort that results from its testimony may be a very deceitful one. I have known very wicked men who have died in the fatal security of a dreadfully mistaken conscience. We know the true worshippers may be killed by those, who *think they do God service by it.*" Nay a blasphemer and a persecutor did verily *think with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and to punish the saints in every synagogue.*" His erroneous

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conscience

" P. xvii. " John xvi. 2. " Galat. i. 13. Acts xxvi. 9, 11.

conscience did not justify him, though he found mercy, and was miraculously converted to *preach that faith which once he destroyed*.^p May you and your friends find like mercy!

Your next attempt is still preparatory to the grand attack, to spring a mine, and blow up those, who were desirous, as they ought, to defend the establishment, so far as it was defensible. For this purpose your *brethren* of the church of England are the devoted objects. Scandalous personal abuse, from which neither dignity, learning, or virtue, can shield the most eminent, are plentifully poured out upon them. Parker and Whitgift are degraded into beadles, appointed *for correction only*:^q the latter is characterised as *unfeeling*:^r it is *the fiery Bancroft: the factious and malicious Laud: Sheldon was his true son*: and indeed the very seat is represented as infectious; for of *Wako*, *friendly to reformation at the trial of Sacheverell*, it is observed, *he was not THEN archbishop of Canterbury*.^s So that with you, it appears a crime sufficient to be thought worthy of that preference; except in a person or two, to one of which^t I readily embrace this opportunity of expressing my gratitude for his favourable opinion of me, in directing, unsolicited, his secretary to prepare the instrument for collating me to a preferment, which he expected would have been the next day in his gift. As for subalterns they can expect no quarters: and accordingly they receive from you, one after another, such language, as a gentleman and a scholar should never give any one. Their being *church champions*, as you call them; that is, writers in defence of the establishment, one should think might secure them, on account of the re-

spect

^p Galat. i. 23. ^q P. xxiii. ^r Ibid. ^s P. lxxxvii.
^t Archbishop Herring.

spect due to publick authority, some degree of peculiarly civil treatment: at least it should not expose them to peculiar outrage. Yet not content with wreaking your spleen in the grossest manner against particular persons, you endeavour with one stroke to get rid of all who may attempt hereafter to support the ecclesiastical part of our constitution. We are to this end grouped together as *complying with terms with which we are not satisfied, for fear of wanting bread, or losing the fruits of our education: taking up with the first flimsy casuistry of a fellow-feeling brother,—living in a state of profligate secularity, disposing men to seek affluence, power and dignity at any rate: with whom popery and protestantism, the evangelists and the mass-book are upon a level:* one would think the writers in our days, for what they call liberty, and more especially in matters of religion, imagined it their privilege to be discharged from any obligations to truth, equity and charity, in relation to those who differ or seem to differ from them. Is their, or any, cause, so good and important as will justify forbidden means to promote it? are they not as liable to be misled by passion and prejudice, as other men? and are they not as much bound to consider seriously and conscientiously whether they are not actually misled by them? If they did so consider, and yet saw occasion to publish their thoughts, they would do it with a milder spirit, and have greater influence, if not with the vehement, and hot-headed, yet with those for whom it is hoped they meant to write, the considerate and judicious. But the disposition to blacken and vilify all who differ from you in opinion, and judging their hearts without knowing them, is really a very blameable one; and

and one, how little soever you are sensible of it, which your own principles lead you peculiarly to condemn. You profess yourself a friend to freedom: yet you cannot bear those who take the freedom to think otherwise than you do. You abhor persecution in every degree: yet you persecute others with all the ill usage at present in your power, and God forbid that you ever should have more. You are a zealous protestant: yet you act on the popish maxim of keeping no faith with hereticks; for undeserved imputations on those whose notions you disapprove, are breaches of that faith and honest treatment, which every man owes to every man. If we really deserve the character you give of us, it behoves us to look to ourselves; the curtain will soon drop on many of us, and we must forecast where to lay our heads *when the night cometh*. But blessed be God! the consciences of some, I trust of very, very many of us, can give a better testimony. With respect to the inferior classes, the reproach is a bitter sarcasm. I am persuaded the same ordinary abilities, with less expence in qualifying them, would have inabled them to have got five times as much, in other employments, as they get in general by their services in the church. The charge of a profligate secularity on such, is as ridiculous and absurd, as the vulgar belief of witches, that they sell themselves to the diavel for no better pay than poverty and contempt. But we know whose ministers we are; His, whose *kingdom is not of this world*: we know what we are to expect, when we enter into his ministry; to be sent *as sheep in the midst of wolves*: and to be hated for our master's sake: † sensibly convinced, notwithstanding the establishment, and those visionary millions you dream

† Matth. x. 16, 22, 25.

dream of, that if in this life only we have hopes in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* Yet are we not without our hopes, that being sound faithful in few things, we shall, when our Lord comes, enter into his joy.† The *quam estis maxime potentes, dites, fortunati, nobiles*, with which you adorn your title page, would be an insult upon the lower part of the clergy. Therefore I suppose it is an admonition to the higher. Many of them shew they want it not : if there are any who do, I hope they will make a proper application of it. But permit me to hope likewise, that you will consider well, with what spirit you gave it. If with a little mixture of envy ; the easy situation in which you intimate yourself to be placed aggravates the fault. God grant you to make a good use of your advantages, whatever they are, and then long to enjoy them !

You would have us also thought enemies to liberty, and yourself the patron of it. But what liberty do you mean ? Newgate might furnish out such solicitors in the cause of liberty ; men sufficiently angry with the establishment of Laws, and clamorous enough (if they thought they should get any good by it) against the conduct of the antireformers in our own country : for such doubtless they account legislators and magistrates. Much more easily then may persons, conscious to themselves of better intentions, be hurried notwithstanding them, by prejudices and passions, into declaiming against reasonable ecclesiastical regulations as tyranny, and crying up the destruction of all order, as the liberty with which Christ hath made us free. In skirmishes of this sort, or however, no closer than this, you spend the chief of your preface. You make an invidious comparison

* 1 Cor. xv. † Matth. xxv. 21. ‡ P. vi.

parison betwixt the churches of England and Rome, by the assistance of Mr. Bayle. *Launoi, Papebroch, Mabillon, and Thiers*, we are informed, discovered that the people were guilty of *an highly criminal superstition in their religious adoration*: and although the people in general were convinced of this, yet *the patrons of false devotion would never recede, but their whole body were determined not to yield an inch to the united powers of piety, truth and common sense.*^{*} But you very truly suppose that an English protestant would not be disconcerted by this instance, unless *the parallel really and in fact will hold*: which you have not attempted to shew. You are pleased indeed to insinuate that *certain particulars are equally proved to want reformation among protestants,*[†] which yet are *continued unreformed*, you must mean, from the obstinacy of the church of England. This Sir, if you produce the proof, will be something to the purpose; we wait for it: no; *I forbear*, say you, *to give instances, though there are more than one at hand.*[‡] This really puts one in mind of Shakespeare's old knight, who would not give a reason upon compulsion, though reasons were as plenty as black-berries.

You therefore, without proof, suppose that all who adhere to the establishment, do it only or chiefly from indolence or lucrative views; and that therefore a strong presumption lies against them. But may it not as easily be said, that they who decry the establishment do it from spleen, or fondness of novelty, if we are not required to give proof of it? And what do such allegations on either side prove, but want of candor in him who uses them? upright and able men may judge differently in these points: and sinister motives ought not to be ascribed to them without suffi-

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* P. vi. viii. x. † P. xiii. ‡ P. xiii.

cient evidence. You, Sir, on the contrary, seem to have no comprehension, no suspicion of a possibility, that any person of judgment can with sincerity acquiesce in the present settlement of the church of England, as tolerable. You signify your opinion indeed that *the remonstrances of the disquisitioners have rendered the church more inflexible, even with respect to some particulars, which seemed before to be given up on all hands.** But this again is mere groundless accusation; for Luther, to whom you refer, you acknowledge to speak only, and he could speak only, of the church of Rome. But however, since you have made a quotation from him, let us try, whether, according to his account, we or you do most resemble the members of that church. Seckendorf in his history of Lutheranism has preserved to us a manuscript preface of that reformer, in which is the clause which you quote. Erasmus had proposed an agreement betwixt the papists and protestants on their mutual giving up some things on both sides. Luther observes with great justness, that “such agreement may respect either articles of faith, or the offices of peace and submission: in the former case there could be none, while the church of Rome required agreement to articles of faith, which manifestly contradicted scripture: in which they (the papists) were so far from yielding any thing, that they now more obstinately defended them, and had the boldness to insist on articles which they themselves had before condemned.” In other cases (where fundamental articles are not concerned,) Luther says, “The protestants have ever been most ready to do, to undergo, or to observe whatever their superiors were pleased to require and impose, and

“ and let God judge whether the opposition be
 “ from us or from you.” Now Sir, if you and
 the disquisitors have proved that we impose ar-
 ticles of faith, as necessary to be believed to sal-
 vation, which are contrary to scripture, and which
 we now obstinately defend, but which we were rea-
 dy to have given up before you or they wrote: then
 the church of England is condemned, eventually, by
 Luther in this preface: if on the contrary, you
 and your friends refuse the concord of charity, sub-
 mission to your governours in points of less mo-
 ment, which do not destroy the christian faith,
 then you and your friends are, eventually, con-
 demned in this preface. And now let the reader
 judge, on the evidence of Luther, whether you or
 we are guilty of the breach of peace, and chris-
 tian charity.^b

You tell us, in the same and next page, that
many have fallen martyrs to the cause of reforma-
 tion, you mean the reformation of things amiss
 in the church of England; *not always indeed by*
fire and sword, but oftener, perhaps, by what kills
as surely—hunger and nakedness. And you are
 careful to remind us, that *there are starving, as*
well as burning inquisitions.^c But you leave us
 utterly at a loss, who these many martyrs of ei-
 ther sort in this good cause have been: and it will
 be lost labor to search for them. Persons disaf-
 fected

^b Seckendorf sums up the account thus: In fidei articulis
 capitalibus et necessariis nullum esse cedendi medium, sed rigi-
 dam veritatem ex sacris literis eruendam esse. . . . In cæte-
 ris omnibus temperamento et conventionibus locum esse,
 immo, charitatis lege exigere, ut pacis causâ nihil non ceda-
 tur, quod, salvâ divinâ veritate, cedi possit: denique, etsi
 non possit conveniri, charitatem tamen meriti colendam esse.
 Seckend. comment. de Lutheran. Lib. iii. Sect. 7. §. xx.
 page. 53. 55.

^c P. xvii.

fectcd to the church of England, as it now stands; may not indeed always so easily get preferment, or however great preferment, as others : and you, Sir, if you had the power, I fear, would be full as apt to put those, who dissent from your notions, into what you call the *starving inquisition*, as any of the bishops are. Your articles are but imperfectly known : those of the established church lie open to all men : and such as disapprove them, have early warning, for the most part, to chuse some way of life, in which they need neither subscribe nor starve.

You assert, that the few answers, made to the remonstrances for a further reformation, have been weak :^d but so great a friend to private judgment will surely allow others to think more favorably of their strength. You add, *the most respectful and reasonable of those remonstrances have been passed by with supercilious contempt.*^e But possibly your connexions with some of the later of these remonstrants may induce you to entertain too high an opinion of their performances. Strong *declarations of respect* are often accompanied with strong *marks of disrespect* : and representations are often passed by, without either contempt or superciliousness : *there is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.*^f You complain, that *no solicitude is perceived to relieve the scruples of conscientious dissenters.*^g But many of the scruples which they formerly thought reasonable, few of them think so now, or at least few, if any, of them would come over to us, if they were relieved in relation to them. And the new scruples of some of them are pointed against an established church, as such, though it admit the fullest toleration,

^a P. xviii. ^e Ibid. ^f Eccl. iii. 7. ^g Ibid.

ration, and those of others will not be satisfied without such alterations in our doctrines and worship, as we cannot make without sin; and even could we make them without sin, and did make them, more of our own people would leave us, than we should gain from theirs. If we mistake in thinking thus; let them shew us, upon what reasonable alterations any considerable number of them will engage to conform. For why should we make such, as we think needless and THEY will not think sufficient? But you add, that we are not solicitous to *consult the real necessities of our own people, by substituting in the room of backneyed and not always justifiable forms, more intelligible and animated methods of worship.*^h If by the decent term *backneyed forms* you mean, such as have been long used (and I know not what else you can mean), *forms* are intended for long use; and the long actual use of them hath always hitherto been understood as a mark of approbation: how often they are to be changed, merely to preserve them from the reproach of being *backneyed*, you have not been pleased to specify. But you say they are not always *justifiable*; such as you think are not so, I hope you do not use: but which of them you reprobate you do not tell us; and surely you will not expect others to reject them by guess, or without knowing why. *More intelligible and more animating ones*, you are of opinion, *ought to be substituted.* Yet I conceive you would be puzzled to find, or to make, a more intelligible form; unless you would exclude the peculiar doctrines of christianity; which however, we cannot give up as unintelligible, though we own them to be mysterious; as some articles of natural religion are

are too. And so far as gospel motives are animating, our common prayer is so. These will always have the chief influence on good minds: what may please some of warm imaginations, may disgust others of cooler judgements: and while it is intended to be made more affectionate or sublime, may become obscure, more exceptionable, and less fit for general use.

However, this backwardness of churchmen to adopt proposals of alterations, you apprehend, *will look to thinking men like a combination to adhere to the established system, for some political purposes, not fit to be owned.*¹ But why may it not be ascribed to some of the more innocent reasons just mentioned, why not to such as you confess influence *some of the warmest friends of reformation*? why not to unperceived prepossessions? why not to want of right judgment in this matter? for persons who *want neither learning nor capacity*, as you observe, on some occasions, are strangely deficient on others. Why must the *very worst* interpretation be put on the conduct of those who are so unhappy as to differ from you in opinion? might it not be owing to a sound protestant principle, not to be daily changing according to the whims of every vain pretender to improvements? why may they not, with Luther, be afraid of men, who invert the 133d Psalm and sing in their hearts, How good and joyful a thing it is to divide brethren, not to make them dwell together in unity? but by inventing new devices to occasion them to break from one another, some this way, some that.*

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¹ Ibid.

* Hi Psalmum invertunt & canunt in cordibus suis, Ecce quam bonum et jucundum est disturbare fratres, ut non habitent in unum, sed alius huc, alius illuc proruat. Neque enim habent pacem et concordiam pro balsamo, sed semper nova querunt, nec putant se aut Doctores, aut Pastores Ecclesiarum

Such men there were who aided popery at that time by disturbing the protestants: such men may now, without intending it, be serving the same cause, by the like means. Surely it may become us to be jealous, and be upon our guard. And pray, Sir, what are *these political purposes, not fit to be owned?* if not fit to be owned, we cannot expect that they who have formed them will tell the world what they are: but the less willing they are to own them, the more plainly they should be exposed in their full length by such penetrating observers and watchmen as you are. Yet you give us no warning of any one.

But sparing as you are of proving any particulars, you quickly make amends by a general charge, that *this set of men can hardly be thought in earnest in their weekly exhortations to christian piety and virtue, or the zeal they occasionally express for the protestant religion and government.* Are you not surprized, Sir, at your own argument as well as charity? The clergy of the church of England encourage no changes in ecclesiastical matters, which they think wrong or unreasonable; and are not vehement for others, which they think of little moment: — Therefore, notwithstanding lives uniformly and diligently spent in practicing and teaching the protestant doctrine, and supporting by word or deed our civil establishment, they are to be deemed hypocrites, void of all regard for either. Can you seriously judge thus? If not, how can your conscience permit you to write thus? I would shew a spirit of moderation towards you; which formerly

elefiarum esse posse, nisi à nobis dissentiant, et quiddam novum sibi excogitent. Hos fugere debemus et cavere, ne eorum simus similes. Luth. enarr. Pl. cxxxiii. in Seckend. L. iii. p. 305.

P. xix.

ly pleaders for christian liberty professed to account a virtue. And though of late they have thrown it off to a strange degree, and you are pleased to scoff at it, as a *tameness that may be stroked*, endeavours should be used to recommend it to you and your friends, by allowing you the benefit of it, which you need so often. I hope and believe therefore, that you have gradually and insensibly heated yourself, or been heated by others, into imaginations, which you will see to be groundless, if you will allow and assist yourself to grow cool. And this you cannot refuse to do, *without opening*, (to speak in your own words) *the prospect of some discomfort, at that awful period, when every man's final account shall be called for.*^m But till you have learned to know what spirit you are of, and how to amend it, persons of christian tempers, it is to be hoped, will guard themselves against catching it from you.

You accuse the church of England with *the meanest of all mean things, self-adulation,*ⁿ for saying, that she is the chief and leading branch of the reformation, which yet you acknowledge *the learned and excellent Dr. Mosheim* to have said; and one of her defenders for adding, that *Lutherans, Calvinists and Greeks, think it each the next best to their own.*^o This, Sir, you tell us *Dr. Mayhew* affirms to be said *without proof*: but it has been fully proved, both to *Dr. Mayhew*, and to others long before.^p Yet you concur with *Dr. Mayhew* in thinking, that only the church of *Rome* will consider it in this light; and that therefore *we are well off, if all other protestants do not think our church the worst but one.*^q How good
C 2 you

^m P. iii. ⁿ P. xxiii. ^o P. xxi. and note. ^p See Mr. Apthorp's review, p. 6, 7. ^q P. xxi. note.

you are to us, to continue a member of this worst church but one, notwithstanding her *unscriptural impositions* ! and even to be one of her unscriptural ministers ! But if that is the worst communion which is the nearest to the church of *Rome*, it would be natural methinks for you to join the Quakers, who are the farthest from it.

However *mean* self-adulation may be in us, it is also *needless* ; for the highest expressions in our favor, that we could desire, have been published in every period since the reformation by foreign protestants. Permit me, Sir, for your information, and as a little comfort to those who might be cast down by the unkind treatment of such an undutiful son of the church of England as yourself, to present you and them with only the three following testimonies superadded to that of Dr. Mosheim. One is of the celebrated *Grotius* in 1638, who says, “ You see how well the reformation of
“ hurtful doctrines has succeeded in England ;
“ for this reason especially, that they who engaged in that most holy undertaking admitted nothing NEW, nothing of THEIR OWN : but kept
“ their eyes fixt on the purer ages of christianity.”* His son calls it, “ if not the greater,
“ yet certainly the *sounder* part of the christian world.”† And *Isaac Casaubon* witnesses, “ If
“ I am not mistaken in my opinion, the *soundest*
“ part of the whole reformation is in England ;
“ where, together with the love of truth, flourisheth the study of antiquity : which when
“ certain

* In Angliâ vides quam benè processerit dogmatum noxi-
orum repurgatio ; hâc maxime de causâ quod qui id sanctis-
simum negotium procurandum suscepere, nihil admisserint
novi, nihil sui : sed ad meliora secula intentam habuere ocu-
lorum aciem. Epist. ad Joan. Corvinum.

† Pars christiani orbis, si non major, sanior certes

Dedic. Carolo II.

“ certain men do slight, they run themselves into
 “ snares, out of which they cannot get without
 “ LYING.”†

You extend your kindness further than reproof, and direct the church of England, how to deserve those encomiums which others give her, and she herself assumes. *Let her abolish all impositions, all bonds, and yokes, all beggarly elements, disagreeable to the spirit and design of christianity: renounce every rite, ordinance and ceremony, which may nourish a jealousy among the Dissenters of her banking after Romish superstition.* But to how many particulars your reformation would reach; what things you would have struck out, and what, if any, introduced; it is impossible to guess, till you are pleased to inform us. The puritans in Queen Elizabeth's days published their platform; you should also publish yours: and give us some knowledge, who they are that approve it. Possibly even the free and candid disquisitors, possibly others, who agree with you in part of your plan, may not agree in the whole of what shall be pulled down; much less of what shall be built up in its stead: and you will do well to settle these points amongst yourselves first, before you offer your scheme to public consideration. Nor will a slight or short consideration by the publick be sufficient. For the scheme, if fully and fairly proposed, will in all likelihood considerably affect, not only the religious tenets, but the civil as well as the ecclesiastical constitution, the laws, and property

C 3

† Si me conjectura non fallit, totius reformationis pars integerrima est in Angliâ, ubi cum studio veritatis viget studium antiquitatis: quam certi homines dum spernunt, in laqueos se induunt, unde, nisi mendacio, exuere se nequeunt. Epist. Claud. Salmasio.

‡ P. xxii, xxiii.

property of these kingdoms. Laity as well as clergy, churchmen and dissenters of all sorts will be interested in what is done. The legislature must be much and long employed about it: for certainly you would not be content with small matters, and have the work done by halves. Now who can tell, whether the government would chuse to enter upon a plan of this sort; or rather think they have business enough already, and call such an attempt a pulling an old house upon their heads? Some men are apt to speak of what they call reformati^ons, as things which the clergy, or even a few of the superior part of them, have in their power to effect without any difficulty, whenever they please: and therefore lay upon them the whole blame of what they are pleased to imagine amiss. Yet they cannot but know, that our rulers have for many years past restrained the convocation from sitting at all; though I am persuaded they think much better of the leading members at least, than you are willing to do. And by all that appears, they have been far from encouraging the house of commons to meddle with church affairs: nor hath the house itself appeared more desirous, than the clergy, to take *the free and candid disquisitions*, or any other scheme of that sort, into consideration: perhaps would reject the proposals of doing it with far more *supercilious contempt*. But you have too much wit in your anger to spend any portion of your spleen on the temporal powers: it is safer to discharge the whole of it unmercifully upon the poor passive ecclesiasticks: and indeed you seem not to have set your heart near so much on getting any thing amended, as on making your brethren hated. Undoubtedly there may be persons in parliament, who would gladly set themselves to work on such a reforming plan: but
how

how many they are I know not: and how considerably they would procede, or how long they would go on before they were weary; and whether they would leave things better or worse in the opinion of the publick, or even in your own opinion, no one I believe can be sure: but there seems to be much more ground for fear than hope. To some indeed mere overturning and confusion may seem beforehand likely to prove a benefit; but it was not found so in the last century, when there was more seriousness and principle to support changes, and to endeavour to bring good out of them, than there is now; and when I think, the danger that popery would make advantage of our disorders, was less than at present.

You ascribe to the dissenters a *jealousy* that the church of England *bankers after Romish superstition.*² And you take great pains to create that jealousy in them: some few of them may perhaps be weak enough to entertain it. But it will be impossible for you to mislead any considerable numbers of them into the belief of so notorious and glaring a falshood. Our clergy abhor popery and spiritual tyranny: they heartily approve the toleration of protestant dissenters: they are confident, that if the dissenters would take the trouble of knowing them better, they would not permit, sometimes wild zealots in religion, and sometimes men of no religion, or even moral principles, to prejudice them against an order of men, whose dispositions towards them are entirely charitable; I may venture to affirm, in a greater degree than they ever were before. But above all things they are confident, that no advances towards popery can with any color of justice be charged upon them: and they strongly apprehend, that such

attempts of removing the ecclesiastical constitution from its foundation, as they perceive some persons wish to make, would in the end serve, by many ways, to promote the favorite designs of that most corrupt church.

In page xxxiii. you declare your purpose, to *wave speculations for the present, and take a view of the steps, taken by authority to reform the church of England after the settlement of it by Queen Elizabeth.* But to what good end can a *partial* view of these steps be taken? If we admit that there was unjust severity sometimes exercised towards the puritans, and too much backwardness to comply with their requests, on one side: ought not also the unreasonableness, the perverseness, the intolerance, the seditious principles on the other side to be set forth at the same time, that the errors of both may be observed, and furnish matter of caution and forbearance to those who come after? But you almost entirely suppress the provocations given to the established church, and dwell only on the rigorous treatment, which they produced. Is this the behaviour of a candid, or even of an honest man? Mr. Neale, who wrote the history of the puritans as much in their favor as with any fairness he could, allows them to have been guilty of great extravagancies. Bishop Maddox hath proved, that he ought to have acknowledged more and greater. But these you pass over, as if they had never been: while you exaggerate the failings of their opponents without mercy.

But I must follow where you lead me, and therefore decline not to examine the historical view which you are pleased to exhibit to us. The long reign of Queen Elizabeth you comprise in one short paragraph: and certainly the shorter the

the better, as you seem not disposed to give us a word of truth relating to this period. You say, *Elizabeth would enter into no treaty with the old puritans to alter or reform anything.* I do not well know whom you mean by the *the old puritans*; these, I think, were not distinguished by that name, till after many years of the Queen's reign were elapsed. If by puritans you mean presbyterians in general, she entered into treaties with them, and supported them in Scotland, in France, and in the Netherlands, and at home granted their foreign brethren a toleration of their discipline; by a French and Dutch church in London, and other cities, as well as in the isles of Jersey and Guernsey. From her own subjects she expected obedience to the laws of their country, where conscience was not violated; nor were they excluded from freely giving their voices in the synod, according to their offices. To the articles they unanimously consented; and were nearly a majority for changing some rites and ceremonies. § They were not treated like the protestants at Trent, or the remonstrants at Dort: but had free liberty to propose their opinions, and defend them: they did so, and were outvoted. The submission required of the minority by the bishops, was, as servants of the Queen commissioned to see her ecclesiastical laws obeyed. In which they were so little forward, that they often met with reproofs from the Queen and council for their remissness. The discontented for a long time objected only to the habits, consenting in articles of faith. Their leaders Sampson and Humfreys acknowledge, that all professed the same faith, and that it was in things plainly indifferent that each followed their own spirit and opinion. Accordingly they did at length subscribe;

scribe; but continued to think the things enjoined not expedient. In such indifferent points the governours must allow people to differ in opinion with respect to the expedience and usefulness of things enjoined: and those who think they were inexpedient or might be exchanged for better improvements, may modestly propose their opinions, but ought to submit to the decisions of their lawful governours. Others were more refractory and refused any submission to authority in things indifferent; for they still agreed in doctrines. These in 1567 being suspended from their ministry, withdrew from the church, and set up a separation, using the Geneva service. These were properly the first puritans: and they were condemned for their refusing to join with the church of England by the presbyterians themselves, who judged the points complained of not sufficient to justify their separation from us. Those points were four.

1. *The want of discipline*: Your favorite Thomas Cartwright answers; "It was necessary to the comely and stable being, but not simply to the being of a church. — To say it is no church, because it hath not received this discipline, methinks is all one as this, as if a man should say, it is no city, because it has no wall, or that it is no vineyard, because it hath neither hedge nor ditch: it is not, I grant, so tightly a city or vineyard, nor yet so safe against the invasion of their several enemies: but yet they are truly both cities and vineyards." — Defence of the admonition to the followers of Browne, p. 98, 99.

2. *Set forms, or stinted prayer*: The Presbyterians answer in their *grave confutation*, "That they

“ they are so far from thinking stunted prayers
 “ unlawful, that in the ordinary and general oc-
 “ casions of the church, they are many times
 “ more fit, than those which are called conceived
 “ prayers. If forms thus devised by men be
 “ lawful and profitable, what sin can it be, for
 “ the governours of the church, to command that
 “ such forms be used; or for us, who are per-
 “ suaded of the lawfulness of them, to use
 “ them?”

3. They objected to ours as *a parliamentary religi-
 on, and that the magistrates should not prescribe to the
 church*: Here again let the presbyterians answer
 for us; “ Will they say, that therefore it is unlaw-
 “ ful for us to hear the word, receive the sacra-
 “ ments, believe the trinity, and all other articles
 “ of faith, because we are commanded by the
 “ magistrate so to do? we ought indeed the ra-
 “ ther to do good things, that are agreeable to
 “ the word, when we know them also to be com-
 “ manded by the magistrate.” *Grave confutation.*

4. Some pretended that *our liturgy was popish,
 picked and culled out of the mass-book*: Here too
 let us see the judgment of the presbyterians; “ So
 “ many points, say they, are there (in our liturgy)
 “ taught directly contrary to the foundation of
 “ popery, that it is not possible popery should
 “ stand, if they take place. It is more proper
 “ to say, the mass was *added to our common-prayer*,
 “ than that our common-prayer was taken out of
 “ the mass-book: for most things in our common-
 “ prayer were to be found in the liturgies of the
 “ church, long before the mass was heard of
 “ in the world.” — Bull against Can. See Stil-
 lingfleet's Unreasonableness of separation, from
 page 35 to p. 41.

It appears that these puritans were worked
 upon by papists in disguise, from the examina-
 tion

tion of a priest at the council table, in the year 1557.¹ The busiest of them, says Fuller, were Coleman, Button, Hallingham, and Benson, who, as Camden tells us, under pretense of a purer reformation, opposed the discipline, liturgy, and calling of Bishops, as approaching too near the church of Rome.² If we would know what *pure conscientious saints* these were, we discover them by a Spanish Jesuit's letter found in the pocket of Heath the Jesuit here about two years after, in which *dividing of protestants* is mentioned as the most effectual way to bring them all back to the church of Rome: and it further saith, that there was at that time a society of Jesuits in England, by authority of pope Pius V. for *dividing* the protestants in England: and that Hallingham, Coleman and Benson were employed to sow a faction among the German hereticks; meaning the English protestants.³ The seasonableness and wisdom of silencing these men is evident from the confession of Gilby, one of these deceived separatists, who says, "that if they had been let alone a little longer, they would have shaken the constitution of this church." And even those who wished the further reformation of the church of England in points of discipline and ceremony, yet condemned the separation, as making a prophane schism, and characterize the persons engaged in it as men "whose spirits were bitter above measure, and their hearts puffed up with the leaven of pride."⁴

These, Sir, were the steps taken by the puritans to reform the church of England: the opposition to which, by the Queen and her servants, you

¹ Ibid. lib. i. p. 81. ² Annales Elis. 1568. ³ Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of separation, pref. p. xiii.
⁴ Stillingfleet, p. 19. ⁵ Ibid. p. 28.

you are pleased to censure. But let the Queen's full vindication be seen in one of her wisest minister's letters to Monsieur Critoy, from which I shall transcribe what more immediately relates to this affair, as you may see in the history of the reformation.

" I find her majesty's proceedings to have been
 " grounded upon two principles; the one, that
 " consciences are not to be forced, but to be won
 " and reduced by force of truth, and use of all
 " good means of instruction and persuasion: the
 " other, that causes of conscience when they
 " excede their bounds, and grow to be matter
 " of faction, lose their nature, and that sovereign
 " princes ought distinctly to punish their practices
 " and contempt, though colored with the pre-
 " tense of conscience and religion." After ex-
 " emplifying these principles in her conduct to the
 " papists, he goes on, " for the other party, which
 " have been offensive to the state, though in ano-
 " ther degree, which named themselves *reformers*,
 " and we commonly call *puritans*, this hath been
 " the proceeding towards them: a great while,
 " when they inveighed against such abuses in the
 " church, as pluralities, non-residence, and the
 " like, their zeal was not condemned, only their
 " violence was sometimes censured, when they re-
 " fused the use of some ceremonies and rites, as
 " superstitious, they were tolerated with much
 " connivancy and gentleness: yea, when they
 " called in question the superiority of bishops,
 " and pretended to a democracy in the church;
 " yet their propositions were here considered, and
 " by contrary writings debated and discussed. Yet
 " all this while, it was perceived that their course
 " was dangerous, and very popular: as because
 " papistry was odious, therefore it was ever in
 " their

“ their mouths, that they sought to purge the
 “ church from the relicks of papistry; a thing
 “ acceptable to the people, who love ever to run
 “ from one extreme to another.

— “ They promised the people many of the
 “ impossible wonders of their discipline — opened
 “ to the people a way to government, by their
 “ consistory and presbytery; a thing though in
 “ consequence no less prejudicial to the liberties
 “ of private men, then to the sovereignty of prin-
 “ ces; yet in first shew very popular. Never-
 “ theless this, except it were in some few that en-
 “ tered into extreme contempt, was born with,
 “ because they pretended in dutiful manner to
 “ make propositions, and to leave it to the provi-
 “ dence of God, and the authority of the magi-
 “ strate.

“ But now of late years, when there issued from
 “ them that affirm the consent of the magistrate
 “ was not to be attended — when they combined
 “ themselves by classes and subscriptions; when
 “ they descended into that vile and base means of
 “ defacing the government of the church, by ri-
 “ diculous pasquills; — when they began both to
 “ vaunt of their strength and number of their par-
 “ tizans and followers, and to use comminations
 “ that their cause would prevail through uproar
 “ and violence, then it appeared to be no more
 “ zeal, no more conscience, but mere faction and
 “ division: and therefore though the state were
 “ compelled to hold somewhat an harder hand to
 “ restrain them than before, yet was it with as
 “ much moderation, as the peace of the state or
 “ church could permit. — As the things them-
 “ selves alter, she (the Queen) applied her religi-
 “ ous wisdom to methods correspondent to them;
 “ still retaining the two rules before mentioned,
 “ in

“ in dealing tenderly with consciences, and yet in
 “ discovering faction from conscience.”^a

This I am persuaded, will be a full justification
 of the Queen’s conduct, with all reasonable men;
 as it is discovered to us by that great statesman,
 Sir Francis Walsingham, who with Leiceſter,
 were the chief agents for the puritans at court,
 and who therefore thoroughly knew both their
 and the Queen’s designs.

As to the spiritual governours, Parker and
 Whitgift, ſucceſſively Archbishops of Canterbu-
 ry, to whom, you ſay, the puritans *were deliver-*
ed over for correction only;^b history would have giv-
 en you an opportunity of doing better juſtice to
 their characters. The Queen’s letter to the for-
 mer in 1564 juſtifies him from any forwardneſs
 to correct them, even after her injunctions in
 1559, and her book of orders in 1561: in
 which letter, ſhe blames the archbiſhop and other
 biſhops, “ for their lack of regard, and their ſuf-
 “ ference of ſundry varieties and novelties.”^c As
 to Whitgift, whom you deſcribed as exerciſing cor-
 rection upon the puritans *with ſo unfeeling a hand,*
and ſo far beyond his legal powers, that upon the
queen’s demise he began to be terribly frighted at
the approach of king James’s firſt parliament; and
it is probable enough his apprehenſions haſtened his
death.^d Wilſon, who was, if not a puritan him-
 ſelf, yet a very moderate churchman, in his life
 and reign of King James I. 1603. ſays, “ Whit-
 “ gift ſtrove to prevail on the puritans with *sweet-*
 “ *neſs and gentleneſs*; and died in David’s ful-
 “ neſs of days, leaving a name, like a ſweet per-
 “ fume behind him.” That his apprehenſions of
 being called to an account after the Queen’s
 death,

^a Burnet’s h. ref. vol. ii. p. 418—421. ^b P. xxiii. ^c Life
 Parker, p. 155. ^d P. xxiii.

death, for his unfeeling cruelty in correcting the puritans, hastened his death, is said without authority. The fact was, that the puritans on the decline of Queen Elizabeth, hoped for new measures under a new King; at least they would not lose the opportunity without making trial of it; especially as it was a King come from Scotland, and who had established the kirk discipline and jurisdiction in that kingdom, and was known to intregue with the earl of Essex, who took the lead here among the puritans. These considerations gave hopes to puritans, and occasioned Whitgift to express some uneasiness of the *Scotch-mist*: but he soon found that through this *mist* he had seen the danger greater than it was in reality; for the King graciously promised the archbishop, by Dr. Nevil, even before he left Scotland, that he would uphold the government of the late Queen, as she left it: and made good his promise by his behaviour in the Hampton-court conference in defence of the established church; when, Sir, as you observe, all objections were happily silenced by the commodious maxim of *no bishop, no king*. There was therefore no room to suspect that any apprehensions about being called to an account for his *unfeeling hand in correcting the puritans* hastened his death. Yet being now 73 years old, after he had long conflicted with them to maintain the government and discipline of the church of England, and had settled it in peace, it might be a great uneasiness to him in his old age to think he foresaw, from the puritans busy endeavours to throw things into confusion again, that he had all his work to do over anew; they having prepared a *directory* to succeed in the place of our liturgy, and being at work to get a parliament to their minds.

minds. Under these circumstances of great age and infirmity, being then much troubled with the jaundice, no wonder if the *cupio dissolvi* operated devoutly upon him, and made him desire to die before that parliament met. So Lord Falkland wished not to live to the end of the day on which he was killed; not from a consciousness of guilt or fear for himself, but from a foresight of bad times coming on. This made the good Archbishop on his death bed cry out, "And now, O Lord, my soul is lifted up, that I die in a time, when I had rather give up to God an account of my Bishoprick, than any longer to exercise it among men." This was the foundation for Camden's saying, "Whilst the King began to contend about the established liturgy, and judged some things therein fit to be altered, the Archbishop died with grief."

Barlow's account of the conference, you say, might well enough have been called a *Farce of three acts*, as it was played by his Majesty's servants at Hampton-Court.^a I should suppose this is not meant as a reflection on Bp. Barlow's account, as void of truth or seriousness, because afterwards when you want the credit of his authority, you call him *the learned and worthy Bishop Barlow*:^b but I suppose you mean that the conference itself was a farce. The effect and substance of it the King himself relates in his proclamation, where he saith that "The success of that conference was such as happeneth to many other things, which moving great expectations before they are en-
D tered

^a Saunderson's History of K. James.

^b Dum de Liturgiâ receptâ Rex contendere cœpit, et nonnulla in eâ mutanda censuit, Archiepiscopus ex morore obiit. Annales Elis.

^a P. xxiv,

^b Conf. p. 145.

“tered into, in their issue produce small effects:
 “that he found mighty and vehement infor-
 “mations supported with weak and slender
 “proofs, as it appeared to him and his council:
 “that there was no cause why *any change* should
 “be in that which was most impugned, namely,
 “the Book of Common-prayer, containing the
 “publick service of God here established; nor in
 “the Doctrine, which appeared to be sincere; nor
 “in the forms and rites, which were justified out
 “of the practice of the primitive Church: and
 “finally, that though with the consent of the
 “bishops and other learned men, then and there
 “assembled, some passages therein were rather
 “explained than altered; yet that the same
 “might very well have been born amongst such
 “men who would have made a reasonable con-
 “struction of them.” Thus their clamorous
 charge against the Church of England, as if con-
 stituted contrary to scripture and antiquity, was
 upon examination found void of truth: their
 boasted thousand to subscribe their petition fell
 short by some hundreds: “Finally, says Barlow,
 “the Puritan Ministers jointly promised to be
 “quiet and obedient.” Or, as Rapin says, “They
 “feigned to be satisfied.”^k If they were so, why
 did they not afterwards conform? if they were
 not, they were hypocrites and acted in vizors.
 And thus we discover who they were, who played
 in this farce.

But it proved, say you, no farce to the poor con-
scientious Puritans, with whom James faithfully
kept his promise, “That if they would not con-
 “form, he would hurry them out of the land, and
 “even do worse.”[†] These had requested in their
 millenary

^k Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 162. [†] Ibid.

millenary petition, "That there might be an
 "uniformity in doctrine prescribed." They
 feigned to be satisfied with the event of the con-
 ference, and promised to be quiet and obedient :
 they had not only allowed, but contended,¹ against
 the Separatists in the last reign, that "The
 "church of England is a true church of Christ ;
 "and such a one, as from which whosoever wit-
 "tingly and continually separateth himself,
 "cutteth himself off from Christ : and that
 "though it were mixed with defects and errors
 "in other matters, it would not justify a separa-
 "tion."² Those *conscientious Puritans* therefore
 who were hurried out of the land, if any were on
 account of nonconformity alone, though they
 had hard usage, yet were *ἀνομιάνειροι*, condemned
 upon their own principles. These *worthy Con-*
fessors, as you call them,³ were in their hearts as
 great persecutors, as you represent Laud to be ;
 and the friends of Episcopacy were, in their
 turns, at least as *worthy confessors* as the Noncon-
 formists, and much heavier sufferers. The truth
 is, the duty of Toleration was scarce seen by any
 on either side ; and therefore our censures of both
 should be tempered with great compassion.

You complain that *when they who first fled to*
New-England had made it a comfortable Asylum,
the authority of government was most cruelly inter-
posed, to deprive those, who would have followed
their brethren, of this relief, that the Bishops might
not lose the satisfaction of tormenting them at home.
 You refer to four writers to justify what you say ;
 But Pierce saith nothing of the matter in the
 place quoted, nor in any other that I can find.

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¹ See Stillingfleet's *Unreasonableness of Separation*, p. 36,
 38. ² p. xxiv. ³ Ibid.

What Macaulay saith, I know not: but she comes too late to be an evidence. Rapin doth not ascribe the prohibition to the ill-natured motive, which I take to be your own invention; but to an apprehension (God grant it may not prove too just at length) that this sect would become too powerful in America. And Wilson, at the year 1614, only saith, "That *some bishops* were not contented to suppress many pious and religious men; but, he knows not for what policy, restrained their going beyond sea: for there were divers families about this time shipped for New-England, and were not suffered to go, though afterwards they were, upon better thoughts, permitted." This restraint, though but temporary, and perhaps not long, he calls indeed a *malicious proceeding*: but says the blame is not to be laid on the bishops in general. This, Sir, is not going so far as you do. But though Wilson says thus much, yet I shall shew the fact to be otherwise; for it should be remembered that in 1614, Abbot, a very moderate man, was Archbishop, and New-England was so far from being then a *comfortable Asylum* to the Puritans, that very few of them had settled, or attempted to settle there till the year 1620, to which year Hutchinson fixes the migration of the Puritans thither. The earliest settlers there went solely on account of trade. Some of the Puritans went over from Holland in 1620, on a promise from K. James that they should not be molested in their religion.† Some who followed them in 1622 were a dissolute crew.* In the year 1628 two of the counsel did not like that the

service

† Neale's Hist. of New England, vol. 1. p. 81, &c.

* Hutchinson's Hist. of Massachusetts Bay, 1765. p. 3—9.

service of the church of England should be wholly laid aside; and therefore drew off, with as many as were of their sentiments, from the rest, and set up a separate society. This offended the governour, who caused the two members of his council to be brought before him; and judging that this practice, together with some speeches they had uttered, tended to sedition, he sent them back to England. The heads of the party being removed, the opposition ceased.* In 1630, Mr. Blaxton, who had left England, being dissatisfied there, and not a thorough conformist, was more dissatisfied with the nonconformity of the new comers: and told them, he came from England because he did not like Lords Bishops; but he could not join with them, because he did not like Lords Brethren.† In 1631, an order was made in New-England, that none should be admitted to the freedom of the body politick, but such as were church members, “ Now, says the
 “ historian, had they been deprived of their
 “ civil privileges in England by an act of parlia-
 “ ment, unless they would join in communion
 “ with the churches there, it might very well
 “ have been the first in the roll of grievances.
 “ But such were the requisites to qualify for
 “ church-membership here, [in New-England,]
 “ that the grievance was abundantly greater.”‡ In 1633, an order was made by the King in council, reciting, that amongst the great numbers, who were frequently going to New-England, divers persons, discontented with the civil and ecclesiastical government at home, resorted thither; whereby such confusion and distraction are grown there, as tend to the ruin of the plantation: and

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therefore

* Ib. p. 12. † Ibid. p. 21. ‡ Ibid. p. 26. 493. 498.

therefore directing that the ships ready to sail should be stayed till further order. But on hearing the defendants, they were dismissed with a favorable order for their encouragement; being assured from some of the council, that his Majesty did not intend to impose the ceremonies of the church of England upon them: and a stop was not put to the emigration.* In 1635 indeed, when some of the principal Puritans and Republicans, who afterwards overturned the government here, had a scheme of going over thither, the King is said to have forbidden them; for many of their proposals to the New-Englanders were such, as implied that they thought themselves at full liberty to form a new independent state there.† And Archbishop Laud was informed, that not new discipline, but sovereignty was aimed at in New-England: and that it was accounted perjury and treason in their general court to speak of appeals to the King.‡ Yet less dangerous persons were so far indulged, that in 1638, 3000 persons more went.† In all likelihood, the misbehaviour of these colonists would have been punished much too severely; and perhaps the church of England (for intolerance was the fault on all sides) would have treated them as harshly, as they wished to treat the church of England, if the domestick troubles had not prevented it. But in the place which you quote from Rushworth, to prove that *the malicious Laud, that they might reap no advantages from their industry, commercial genius, and Christian liberty, contrived to cramp their trade by foolish proclamations,* there is absolutely nothing more

* Ibid. p. 32—34. † Ibid. p. 42, 491—501. ‡ Ibid. p. 86. † Ibid. p. 86. ° P, xxiv.

more than an order of council, Apr. 6. 1638, at which three privy counsellors, besides Laud, were present, to take off a late restraint, which had been laid on some ships with passengers to New-England; directing at the same time, that no ships carrying passengers should go thither without special licence from the commissioners of the Plantations: and giving for the reason of this direction, the disorders and want of government in that colony, through which, well-affected persons had suffered much loss in their estates by the unruly faction; whereof fundry and great complaints had been made to the council-board, and proved to be true.* There was an order of council very like this in the preceding year.

If, as Heylin observes, and I know not that any one else asserts it, there was a scheme *to send a Bishop over* to the presbyterian or independent New-Englanders, *and to back him with some forces* to compel, if he were not able to persuade obedience, it was a wicked scheme. And it would be a wickedness of the same, I mean of the persecuting, kind, to restrain those whose consciences chuse episcopal government, from having Bishops in such manner settled amongst them, as to have no concern with persons of different sentiments, nor encroach on any man's civil or religious rights, nor make any change in the constitution of the government, or the powers of the magistrate's administering it. But I cannot but observe, Sir, that you ascribe solely to Laud, what Heylin ascribes, in general, to the chief physicians, who were to take especial care of the church's health; and that you say, Laud was *on the point* of executing, what your voucher only tells us *was once under*

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consideration,

* Rushworth, vol. 2. p. 409.

† P. xxv.

‡ Ibid.

consideration, but strangled in the first conception.* Nor must I omit, that the colonists had been the aggressors, as far as they could, by sending letters to England, which "had influenced many" to leave the assemblies of the church, because "of a stinted liturgy : and to absent themselves" from the Lord's supper, because such as ought "to be, were not debarred from it." Of these things, and several others, a number of the Puritan ministers in England wrote to make complaints to them, not without threatnings of animadverting upon them.†

You say, it is more than probable that King James was a cripple in conformity, till he talked with his Bishops ; the time having been, when he talked against the ceremonies of the Church of England with scorn and contempt, and called the English Liturgy an ill-said Mass in English, which wanted nothing of the Mass but the liftings : meaning, I suppose, the elevation of the Host. Now it is extremely probable, that some of his early instructors taught him to speak thus : the words quoted being so totally void of truth and decency, that one may easily believe them to be theirs. But as we are not told, when he spoke them ; so we have his own declaration, that " Since he had ability to judge, he ever disliked " the opinions of these men."

You go on to say, that Bancroft pretended to Abp. Spotswood, that only 49 Puritan Ministers stood out, and were deposed, after the Hampton-Court conference : but that Calderwood makes the number of silenced and deprived Ministers, on that occasion, three hundred. Now Calderwood's

* Heylin's life of Laud, p. 3, 47. † Hutchinson, p. 81.

* P. xxv. " Barlow, p. 20, 72. " P. xxv, and xxvi. in a note.

wood's words are, that the number of Ministers forbidden to preach, or deprived, or excommunicated, or imprisoned, or obliged to quit their country, was three hundred. And this might be true, though the silenced and deprived were but 49. Or if the accounts were inconsistent, Bancroft had better opportunities of knowing the truth than Calderwood, and was as likely to speak it. Nay you own, that he might persecute no more than 49: but you add, that he might *not hold it safe*; or that the rest *had not wherewithal to buy off their censures*. Motives entirely of your own forging, merely that if you cannot make the Archbishop a liar, you might make him in other respects as bad.

But Bancroft probably forgot to tell his brother Spotswood, how many shiploads he had terrified into the plantations.* Shiploads of Ministers, I suppose, you mean; for no others are mentioned in the preceding words. But here unhappily you forget that Bancroft died in 1610, and that the first shipload of Puritans, that we know of, consisting of about 120 persons, did not go to America till ten years after.

You are pleased in the next place to account for what you call *Bancroft's gross misrepresentation*, in this manner: *In 1669 some of the clergy had private orders to make the conventiclers as few and inconsiderable as might be.*† You have not yet proved that his account was a *gross misrepresentation*, and therefore might have spared yourself the trouble of accounting for a thing that probably never was: And your accounting for it is as extraordinary, as it was unnecessary. The book you quote I have not seen: but supposing it to be one of credit, and fairly quoted, your proof will be, that some of the

the clergy were directed to act thus in 1669 ; therefore Bancroft acted thus threescore years before. You tell us indeed, that *Sheldon took the system of such politicks from Bancroft and Laud :* But you give us no other authority for this than your own.

In the next page you fall upon Spotswood, who had happened to say, "Such a noise will a few disturbers make in any society, where they are tolerated." To this you first reply, what, though generally true, yet you, Sir, have the least right to alledge, that *the more such disturbers are tolerated, the less noise they make.* And unless such noise be more hard to cure than their halting, you gave us a contrary instance from Fuller, who informs us, that *many cripples in conformity, at that time, were cured of their halting therein,* by not being tolerated. Then you subjoin, *but Spotswood, by the word tolerated, meant suffered to live. Nothing like a halter to make a man cease his noise!* Were then the 49 Ministers, of whom Spotswood speaks, or any one of them, hanged, or otherwise put to death? or doth Spotswood give the least hint, that because they were suffered to live, therefore they were tolerated; or that Bancroft should have done more against them than he did? Surely, Sir, on seeing such instances of your rancor laid before you, you cannot but think it concerns you to look seriously into yourself. And it is as imprudent as unjust to charge the Church of England with not suffering the Puritans to live, in order to draw an odium upon her, and compassion towards them: for it unluckily falls out that both the odium and compassion should be inverted. The church
of

of England did not put the dissenters from her to death, but the dissenters both in New-England and Scotland thought themselves at liberty so to punish those who dissented from them. Witness in New-England their horrible executions of the Quakers, who, in their preface to a book, entitled New-England judged, 8vo, 1703, say, that the dissenters there *made their little finger of cruelty bigger than ever they found the loins of the Bishops.* And Dr. S. Chandler, in his History of Persecution, to which you are no stranger, mentions the bloody law made by these men, "*who themselves, to shun persecution (which was but a small fine for not frequenting the publick worship) had left Old England.* And under cover of it had wickedly murdered several innocent persons, several of their priests standing with pleasure to see them executed. And then names some who were HANGED at Boston for being Quakers; and says they would have proceeded to more executions had it not been for the Mandamus of Charles II. who, though a Papist, yet was of a more merciful disposition than these New-England Disciplinaryans."† So that the mention of a *halter* in this place was as unlucky, as it was false and malicious: and in Scotland your clients subjected to seizure the lands of those who would not take their solemn league and covenant to extirpate episcopacy, with permission to *kill* such as resisted.^b

Still you say, that a good natured man would throw a cloak over the violence of the ruling bishops of those times, if he could find one large enough to cover it.^c But you are so far from shewing yourself this good natured man, that you throw your whole cloak

† P. 401.

b Rapin, vol. ii. p. 484.

c P. xxviii.

cloak over the violence of the other side, and leave the bishops exposed to the resentment of the reader. Suffer me to pull a little of it over them, though I should happen thereby to uncover some of the violence of your friends. You say that of the bishops lost them first their seats in parliament, then their whole authority. But you well know that there were many, who, if the bishops had been ever so mild, would have deprived them of both. And the offer of preserving them, with limitations of their power, was never made them for their choice, as you suppose it to have been.* And as the laws stood, they were not *delinquents*; and therefore could not be justly *punished for examples*. The laws against Dissenters indeed ought to have been moderated, as they were at the Revolution. This being done, *the pomp and lustre of episcopacy*, as with great ridicule you affect to call it, can hurt no one; nor indeed offend any one, who is not of a strangely envious disposition. Nay your predecessors, advocates for universal toleration, the Independents, have given their opinion in favor of episcopal government, before it was moderated, when compared with the presbyterian, after having experienced both. For thus writes J. Price, in his *Clerico-Classicum*. “Have we not cause to
 “ judge better of many of the prelatical party,
 “ who were men of learning and conscience,
 “ and never so violent against their opposers in
 “ church and state as *yourselves*?” And, addressing himself to the city of London, affirms,
 “ The antient love, union, and goodness of thine
 “ inhabitants is turned into hatred, division and
 “ bitterness each against other, causing thy foundations to shake, and thy pillars to tremble;
 “ which

“ which is all the benefit thou hast received by
 “ the exchange of thy late *Diocese* for the *Pro-*
 “ *vince* of London.” Meaning that London
 was in a better condition under prelacy than
 under presbytery. In return, the presbyterians
 charge the independants, who boasted of their
 reforming spirit, and that they had spread the
 sweet savour of religion abroad throughout the
 kingdom, “ with having among them multi-
 “ tudes who deny the mystery of the Trinity, the
 “ Divinity of Christ, the authority of the Scrip-
 “ tures, the immortality of the soul, the resur-
 “ rection of the body, and such like.” And
 then ask, “ Is this to spread the sweet savour of
 “ Religion throughout the kingdom? If the
 “ Jews were banished out of England for poi-
 “ soning our fountains and springs of water,
 “ what do such men as they deserve, who labor
 “ to poison the pure fountains of the Scriptures?”
 And Edwards in his *Gangræna* describes the In-
 dependents, “ as the most hypocritical, false,
 “ dissembling, cunning generation in England.”
 This, Sir, is the character your friends mutually
 give of each other. And could not your justice
 afford the Bishops a skirt of your cloak, though
 you had not charity enough to cover all their
 violence?

You close this period with a parting thrust at
 the Bishops of Charles the First's reign, by say-
 ing, *they were wiser than to content themselves*
with any diminution of their power then: supposing
that if ever the crown should recover the prerogative
claimed, Episcopacy must rise again with that in all
*its pomp and splendor.*¹ The chief object of your
 rancour among the Prelates of that reign, was
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¹ Ibid. p. 3. ² Vindication against the Clerico-Classicum,
 p. 65. ³ Part iii. p. 240. ⁴ P. xxviii.

the Archbishop, Laud: but whatever his *Christian* wisdom might have been in his struggles with unreasonable men, he certainly gave but a very slender proof of his *worldly* wisdom, in losing his head in Charles the First's reign in order to wear his mitre after the restoration, *in all its pomp and lustre*. And here, Sir, give me leave to pay a debt due to truth and to the memory of Archbishop Laud, whom you treat in a manner very unbecoming his character and your own. He was undoubtedly much too vehement in his natural temper; and the general disposition of the times on both sides increased his heat. He was also too fond of externals in religion. But some regard ought to be paid to his learning, his liberality, his excellent book against popery, and the successful pains which he so kindly took to recover Chillingworth back from it. His very candid treatment likewise of the famous John Hales, and the esteem of that great man for him, who mourned for his death in a most remarkable manner, and wished he had died in his stead, prove him to have had, together with his very blameable rigors, no small merit of the good-natured kind; to which persons in after times, who could not know him so well, have by no means done sufficient justice.

You proceed next to the Savoy conference 1661, under Charles II. which you characterize thus; *A complication of sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence on the part of the orthodox, hardly to be paralleled in popish history.** Hard words from your mouth, by this time, will, I presume, pass for nothing with the reader, without proof. More might have been granted to the Dissenters at that time;

time; and I wish more had been granted. But all, that could have been granted, would not have satisfied them. Let us candidly weigh the points in question at that conference. 1. Church government. 2. The English Liturgy. 3. Rites and ceremonies, and ecclesiastical habits. The King was in the main for restoring the establishment as it was before the year 1640; yet in testimony of his desire of peace and union, if by such means it could be obtained, he consented to restrain the episcopal jurisdiction: to permit the Liturgy to be altered: and to indulge the scrupulous in several instances with respect to ceremonies, and the ecclesiastical habits.¹ The presbyterian commissioners yield nothing. 1. As to government, they insisted upon conforming to their solemn league and covenant, in which they swore to extirpate Episcopacy: the Episcopacy they pretended to allow being not of order or jurisdiction, but a presidency only. Their words are, "We are induced to *insist* upon the form of synodical government, conjunct with a prefixt presidency or Episcopacy." This they conceived would disintangle them from the difficulty with which they were perplexed: the King required that the essence and foundation of Episcopacy should be preserved, though the extent of the jurisdiction might be moderated: at the same time they had sworn, in their solemn league and covenant, to extirpate Episcopacy. They therefore offer to preserve the *name*, without the *thing*: by which means they thought they should keep both oath and promise, though contradictory; and at the same time *establish* Episcopacy and *extirpate* it. 2. With respect to the Liturgy, the King conceded that

¹ The King's Declaration, Oct. 25, 1660.

that there might be an emendation: The Presbyterians required that the King would dispense with the laws in being, to screen them from punishment for not using the Liturgy: to excuse them from using any part of it, even such part as they had no objections to: and that the King would abstain from the use of it in his own chapel. At the very time they were petitioning, or rather demanding, a liberty of conscience for themselves, contrary to the laws then in force, they denied the King the liberty of his conscience, according to the laws. 3. With respect to ceremonies and habits, they say, Some think them *unlawful in themselves, and contrary to God's word; others that they are only inconvenient.* They desire therefore *that there be no law or canon, commanding or prohibiting them, because such liberty would preserve uninterrupted unity.** I should imagine the use of rites or vestments by some of the congregation, which others think in themselves unlawful and contrary to God's word, would not be a very effectual means of promoting unity among them. But they might hope, that if they were not enjoined, they should be soon able by clamor and faction to drive them out of the church. And now, Sir, on which side, think you, was the sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence, in the Savoy conference?

The

* This is taken from a MS. address to his Majesty of the presbyterian commissioners now in my hands, among other papers which once belonged to B. Morley. Whether it was ever printed or not I cannot say. I presume it is that which Collier means, when he says, "The presbyterian divines having perused the Declaration, draw a petition to the King, and subjoined some remarks on the Declaration. They delivered what they had done to the Lord Chancellor, who thought it most adviseable to drop this address, and never called on them to present it to the King." Eccl. hist. b. ix. p. 873.

The experienced stiffness of the presbyterians; and the King's intention, under cover of indulgence to them whom he loved not, to procure a toleration for the papists, did very probably occasion the parliament to pass the vote in 1668 against receiving Judge Hale's bill for indulgence to the former. In relation to the declaration from Breda, Clarendon justly observes, " that the King promising only such indulgence, as an act of parliament should establish, did not break his word. The Parliament indeed might have been inclined to have granted this indulgence to protestant dissenters, without granting it to papists : but they might find the King determined to make the toleration or exclusion general to all nonconformists; so that either the papists should be tolerated with the presbyterians, or these shut out with the papists. It certainly had become the presbyterians under these circumstances, to have given peace to the church by their conformity. I say, *certainly* ; not by opposing my judgment to theirs, but by deferring to a presbyterian tribunal, the foreign protestants who condemn them. Mr. du Bosc, preacher of the reformed church of Caen, writes thus : " I think not that any
 " of my brethren will contradict me, if I say, that
 " well-ordered episcopacy hath most important and
 " considerable utilities, which cannot be found in
 " the presbyterian discipline. If we have followed the last in our churches, it is not for
 " any aversion that we have against the former ;
 " it is not because we hold episcopacy to be contrary to the nature of the gospel, or because
 " we think it less convenient for the good of the
 " church, or less worthy of the condition of the true
 " flocks of the Lord: but it is because *necessity* hath

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" obliged

"obliged us to it; because reformation having
 "been begun in this kingdom by the people and
 "by inferior churchmen, the places of bishops
 "remained filled with men of a contrary religion,
 "so that we were constrained to content ourselves
 "with ministers and elders, as well as we could,
 "for fear of setting bishop against bishop in the
 "same town; which would have caused furious
 "troubles and implacable wars, and put a stop
 "to the progress of the gospel.—In the church
 "of England reformation having been begun by
 "the bishops, there would be reason to think it
 "strange if episcopacy had not been preserved
 "therein. And if there be any in England at
 "this time, that be so rigidly partial for pres-
 "byterian party, as to justify against that ancient
 "order of episcopacy, and seek to root it quite
 "out to the prejudice both of church and state,
 "they cannot but be very much to blame for
 "it." Mons. Gaches, one of the ministers of
 Charenton, asks, "How comes it to pass, that
 "those of your [English] presbyterians, who
 "are great, understanding, and wise men, have
 "such an aversion against moderate episcopacy?
 "The name of schism may do more harm to the
 "church in one year, than all the excesses of epis-
 "copal authority can do in an age."

Mons. le Moyne, beside what Collier quotes
 from him, says, "I confess that I conceive not by
 "what spirit they are led, who oppose that
 "[episcopal] government and cry it down with
 "such violence. For I defy any man, whoever he
 "be, to shew me another order more suitable,
 "with reason, yea, or better agreeing with holy
 "Scripture, and of which God made more use
 "for the establishment of his truth, and the ampli-
 "fication

“fication of his kingdom.—In the first age there
 “was always some subordination in the church ;
 “and, in the time of her innocency, she was
 “always conducted by a government equivalent
 “to the episcopal.” These were the sentiments
 of the foreign presbyterians, at that time, on the
 head of episcopacy, neither do they seem to have
 altered their judgement since ; for I have heard
 on the best authority, on such that I can be assur-
 ed of the truth of the relation, that a protestant
 minister, sent over hither a few years ago, by his
 brethren in France, upon a commission of im-
 portance, on his own accord, without any thing
 said to lead him to it, freely declared, That they
 thought they should flourish much better and
 make many more converts, if our bishops were
 to ordain bishops for them.

As to the liturgy, Spanheim, professor at
 Geneva, in a letter to the earl of Lauderdale,
 extols and admires the publick worship of God
 and publick piety of the church of England,
 whereof, says he, “The like is not easily to be
 “found elsewhere.”⁹ Mons. Goyon, in behalf of
 the French church, affirms, “There is not one
 “minister in all the province of Aquitain, that
 “thinketh the conscience wounded by using the
 “English liturgy ; and that those are in a dream,
 “and dote, that have such an opinion.”⁹

Bochart of Alençon thinks, that those who re-
 fuse to communicate with the church of England
 because of their ceremonies, “are schismatics.”
 And Mr. Morin, that, “it would be an extreme
 “peevishness to be scandalized at them.”⁹ And
 the famous duke of Sully, a steady protestant,
 upon the view of our solemn service and cere-
 monies at Canterbury and at court, said, that

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“if

⁹ Ibid. p. 127—130.⁹⁹⁹ See Durel.

“ if the reformed churches in France had kept
 “ the same orders amongst them, which we
 “ have, there would have been many thousands
 “ of protestants more there, than now there
 “ are.”

Such were the opinions of unprejudiced presbyterians abroad, both in France and Geneva; which shews the sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence at the Savoy conference, in their judgement, was on the side of the dissenters: and that our publick establishment was such, that none would have reason to quarrel or find fault with it, although *the last trumpet should find us, as a church, just where the act of uniformity left us.** As private Christians, perhaps we greatly need improvement; and I wish we had all that the admonition of friends, the censure of enemies, and the grace of God can work in us.

While you charge hypocrisy on the church divines, I believe with little reason; I am sure without any proof: you are pleased to spread your cloak over a glaring instance or two of hypocrisy in divines of the other party, mentioned by Lord Clarendon from his own knowledge: yet quote the conclusion, which his Lordship drew from thence; careful at the same time not to quote it as a conclusion from preceding facts, but as if it were an independent maxim; and unfairly change the terms, to make it still harsher: saying, that *nothing but the severest* [his Lordship says only, a severe] *execution of the law can ever prevail on that class of men to conform to government.* It is no great wonder that Lord Clarendon should incline to such severity in those days, and pay little regard to pretences of conscience, where he saw so many proofs of disingenuity,

as

* Barlow, p. 37, 38.

* P. xxxviii.

as he has recorded in that work, besides the above mentioned. But God be thanked that milder methods have long been taken, and I dare say, will be taken, how little amendment or acknowledgement soever they may produce.

You tell us, *Bishop Burnet puts the inflexibility of Lord Clarendon towards the nonconformists to the account of his gratitude to the bishops for the services they had done him in the affair of his daughter's marriage with the duke of York.* And add, *If this was the case, more shame for the bishops who required such a requital.* But bishop Burnet neither says, nor hints, that they required it of him. This is intirely a compliment of your usual sort. Nor is it likely that any voluntary gratitude towards them influenced him. For what signal service had they done him? I believe bishop Burnet alone mentions any. And he saith only, that "the King ordered some bishops and judges to peruse the proofs of the marriage: and they reported,"—what they could not possibly do otherwise than report, that "according to the doctrine of the gospel and the law of England, it was a good one." Indeed the whole of what his lordship hath written concerning this transaction with the nonconformists evidently proves, that he acted from his judgement in it. But you inform us, *He did not always think so highly of established ecclesiastical forms, if we may judge from two of his essays,*" which you name. Now these essays were written by him, one in the same year, and the other two years after it: So that any great change of his mind is not probable. And in fact there is nothing in either of them derogatory from established ecclesiastical forms in the least.

E 3

You

* P. xxx.

" Ibid.

You say, that *the names of the undertakers to reform the church in 1668, were sufficient to recommend a plan of reformation to any Christian government.* Now, I doubt whether they intended their plan should be considered as a reformation, or only as an expedient to remove the scruples of the dissenters, without determining whether they were just or not. But I am sure you must think their reformation, if it were meant for such, a very insufficient and trifling one : and had it then taken place, must in consequence of your own principles have written as earnestly against that establishment, as you do against the present ; though you aim at depreciating the present, by seeming to approve that.

The disappointment of this scheme you think *is fairly accounted for by an anecdote from Dr. Calamy,*² which ascribes it to bishop Ward of Salisbury. But bishop Burnet who was much more likely to know the circumstances of the case than Dr. Calamy, makes no mention of bishop Ward on the occasion : nor doth Dr. Calamy himself in his first edition, which was published thirty-four years after the time ; nor in his second, eleven years after that, say whence he had his information. And the house of commons was sufficiently possessed against terms of comprehension in those days, without the help of any bishop. But you seem to have a peculiar pique at bishop Ward ; whom you represent as *playing Tillotson a trick ;*³ and you quote Calamy for it, though Calamy gives not the least hint of any such thing : and to finish his character, you charge him with obliging Dr. Whitby to make a retractation of some propositions in his *Protestant reconciler*, two of which you specify.⁴ Now really if the rest

were

¹ P. xxxi.

² Ibid.

³ P. xxxv.

⁴ P. xxxii.

were like them, the doctor had no great hardship done him. For they are expressed so incautiously, that one of them is in terms, and the other by consequence, inconsistent with making an act of parliament, or a by-law of a corporation, about any common matter.

What you advance from Calamy concerning Morley,* stands on the single authority of an adversary, writing near thirty years after, without naming his informer, and not likely to be made acquainted with a fact of this nature: nor indeed is it in the least probable, that Morley should tell even the bishops, *openly in the house of Lords*, how notably he had contrived to deceive the dissenters. Besides, if *the dissenters would have been bound to the same things still by other clauses and obligations, though the assent and consent to the common-prayer, and the renunciation of the covenant were taken off*, they and their friends, as well as their enemies, must have known it, and the bishop's poor artifice could have deceived nobody. But it is notorious, that they would not have been bound to the *same things*; for by what *clauses or obligations* would any one have been bound to give his assent and consent to the common-prayer, or to renounce the covenant, when an act of parliament had set him free from both? ministers would still have been bound to *other things*, but not to the *same*: they would have been bound to use the common-prayer: but the dissenters objected against giving their assent and consent to it, as a separate grievance from that of using it, and a greater. This story therefore thus told, how long soever it hath stood uncontradicted, cannot be admitted for true.

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*P. xxxiii.

The reason which you give why Morley and Ward seemed so often to be for an accommodation,* appears not to flow from any better source than your own malignity; and may therefore be passed by, with the wit, whatever it be, concerning *Bell and the dragon*.

And now, Sir, having heard and examined your account of this step towards reforming the church of England, taken by authority, and obstructed by churchmen, please to hear an account of it given by one engaged in it, Dr. Burton, who had been chaplain to lord-keeper Bridgman, and two of your own witnesses produced above, Dr. Calamy and bishop Burnet. From the first we learn, that in 1668 lord-keeper Bridgman, lord chief justice Hale, and two or three divines at their request, of which Dr. Burton was one, had conferences for this purpose with some leading presbyterians; but found them so backward to make any reasonable advances, or adhere to those they seemed to make, that they grew weary of treating with them. From whom the obstruction came, all through this period, Dr. Calamy witnesses, in his abridgement of the life of Baxter, page 598, that about the year 1672, so ill a spirit was got among some of them (the presbyterians) . . . that many were much offended at Mr. Baxter's preaching for union, and against dissention. And bishop Burnet tells us, in the year 1681, when a bill of comprehension was offered by the episcopal party in the house of commons, by which the presbyterians would have been taken into the church, to the amazement of all people, their party did not seem concerned to promote it: on the contrary they neglected it. And this increased the jealousy, as
if

if they hoped they were so near carrying all before them, that they despised a comprehension. And this I think is an anecdote that will better account for the disappointment of this scheme, than what you have been pleased to suppose of Ward's and Morley's tricks.

In the next attempt under King William, you say, that *by a fatal mistake, it was agreed, that the matter* (the reforming the church of England) [you should rather have said the bringing over the dissenters to it] *in 1689, should pass through the forms of convocation, where it met with an effectual defeat from the zeal and activity of a faction in the lower house.*^c But indeed nothing for that purpose was laid before that convocation. I neither say, nor think, that if it had, they would have approved it. But they should not be charged with doing what they had no opportunity of doing.

You think that bishop Compton *could not be very cordial at the bottom to the cause which he put in so fair way of being ruined, to gratify his personal resentment against Tillotson.*^d Now, Sir, I, and many others, think, that you, as far as is in your power, put the protestant cause in a fair way of being ruined, to gratify your resentment against some of the clergy; will you allow us to draw the conclusion that *you are not very cordial to it at the bottom?* Nothing is more common than for men to prevent, by their passions and prejudices, the success of what they have very much at heart. But I excuse not any one, if he is really guilty, for such an intemperate resentment: but let us avoid that guilt ourselves, by not imputing to any man more than his proportion of guilt,

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^c P. xxxvi.

^d Ibid.

You say, that *one single circumstance will serve to characterize the spirit and piety of these convocation men*: which is their saying, that *being representatives of a formed established church, they do not think fit to mention the word, religion, any further than it is the religion of some formed established church.** And is not the word *religion* as well applicable to the external worship of the visible church, as it is to the internal devotion of the invisible? and may there not be fit occasions sometimes to speak of it only in the former sense, and sometimes only in the latter? You very learnedly affirm that *θενομία, the word for religion in the Greek Testament, is no where appropriated to a formed established church.* But, Sir, the convocation surely did not address the King in Greek, but in English: their word was *religion*: what then have we to do with *θενομία*, except that it gives us an opportunity of admiring your erudition? and had you substituted the word *religion* instead of *θενομία*, your assertion had been equally true; for the word *religion* is no where appropriated to a formed established church, nor did the convocation imagine or pretend it was. The question is, may it not be applied to a formed established church? and is it not so applied in the New Testament? St. Paul says, *I profited in the Jews religion above many of mine equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.*† This was the established religion of Judaism. Here I expect you will correct me for talking English, and say, the word *θενομία* is not used in the original. And I say again, that is nothing at all to the purpose; for *religion* was the word which the convocation used and not *θενομία*; yet, unfortunately for

* Ibid.

† Galat. i. 14.

for your learned observation, *θρησκεία* is as applicable to a formed established church as religion is, and so applied even in the New Testament, *after the most straitest sect of our RELIGION, I lived a Pharisee*; ^a This means the religion of the Jews, *ἐκκλησία θρησκεία* comprehending three particular sects of religion out of that nation, so that *θρησκεία* does not only mean sometimes pure religion and undefiled as distinguished from an outward establishment, but sometimes also established religion comprehending men in error. Nay the *θρησκεία* of the New Testament is sometimes said to be vain, which proves that it is not appropriated to that which is pure and undefiled; and that man's religion is described as vain, who *bridleth not his tongue*.^b I hope the convocation men might not be a jot the less pious, for not meddling with such religion.

The fact you refer to, when stripped of the learning and wit with which you have disguised it, is plainly this: The upper house desiring the lower convocation men to give their reason, why, in a proposed address, they inserted *protestant CHURCHES* instead of *the protestant RELIGION*, they gave it in the words you have recited: meaning evidently, that although, as they offered to assure the King, *the interest of All the protestant churches was dear to them*, yet they did not think fit, on addressing him as a convocation of the church of England, to use an expression, which might seem to include persons calling themselves protestants, though of no church, or separatists without cause from the church, of which they were representatives. Plainly there was no impiety in declining the word religion, on this occasion, for this reason: unnecessary delicacy there was; and perhaps some perverseness too.

But

^a Acts xxvi. 5.

^b James i. 26.

But if there was, they did not adhere to their point. The words *protestant religion* stood after all, in the address, with only a little variation of phrase.

But the poor convocation men must run the gantelope through three languages, and be scourged in English, and Greek, and Latin. For *their religion you think had rather a pagan cast*, because, like that of Cicero, it comprehended *the fear of God with the outward worship*; while your own evangelical idea of religion is expressed by another pagan, Festus, whose description of a religious man you give us, and which has no fear of God or outward worship in it.

You tell us, that *the divines employed under King William's commission were free enough in acknowledging and characterizing the blemishes in the church of England, if the remaining imperfect accounts of that transaction may be depended on: and that this hath been given as a reason, why the original papers relating to it, have been so carefully secreted, as to have escaped the most diligent inquiries.*¹ It was in your power, Sir, to have given a fairer account of this matter. For you have read in Dr. Birch's life of Abp. Tillotson, that the proposed alterations were in the hands of Abp. Tenison; *who was cautious of trusting them out of his own keeping; not because they would reflect on the church of England, but because, if they came to be publick, one side would upbraid their brethren for having given up so much, while the others would justify their nonconformity because those concessions were so little.*^k You have also read in Dr. Calamy's abridgement of the life of Baxter, that the doctor had by him a copy of the alterations, but that *they never having been communicated to the convoca-*
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¹ P. xliii.

^k P. 191.

tion, nor exposed to the view of the world, he knew not how proper it would be for him to print them.¹

These things may shew, that not a remarkable freedom of the commissioners in acknowledging blemishes, but other prudential reasons have kept the alterations secret. However, they are still in being: and the journal of the proceedings is in several hands. And both may be produced, when it will be likely to do more good than harm. For if ever we shall come to be, as I hope we shall sooner or later, in such happy circumstances, the most hopeful method of laying a foundation for composing our ecclesiastical differences will be to imitate that, which was taken by the great men of those days: just as Tully proposes for reconciling two sects of philosophers; *requiri placere terminos, quos Socrates pepigerit, iisque parere.*^m But this will by no means answer your views, unless you can hope, by setting out upon reasonable concessions, to obtain pernicious ones in the end. Those good and wise men were far from going your lengths. And it might surely give you some diffidence of your scheme, if you would reflect, that amongst all the persons, churchmen or dissenters, whom you have hitherto profest to respect the most, scarce one would have approved it, or failed to be shocked at it. Their reformations would leave the church, in your opinion, so grievously unreformed still, that you could never acquiesce in any of them long; but perhaps would bring against them charges nearly, if not quite as heavy, as you do against the present constitution of it. Dr. Calamy indeed thinks, that the alterations

¹ P. 655. In his second edition, vol. i. p. 447. he saith his copy was an exact one, but irrecoverably lost by lending it out.

^m Cicero de leg. lib. i. § 21.

tions proposed at the revolution, with one more with relation to orders, from 13 Eliz. c. 12. would have brought in two thirds of the dissenters in England: ^{it} possibly so; possibly much otherwise. But supposing him in the right, who can say, what mischief adopting them at that time might have done to the established government? Bishop Burnet, zealous as he was for a comprehension, while the design was depending, observes, that *there was a very happy direction of the providence of God in the failure of it; and that by all the judgements, which its friends could afterwards make, if they had carried a majority in the convocation for alterations, they would have done them more hurt than good; because the Jacobites would have made their advantage of them, by pretending that they stuck to the ancient church of England in opposition to new models.* King William supported himself with difficulty as it was; but, persisting in his attempt, though a very laudable one, might have overset him, and brought back King James, whom popery must have followed. Whether any of the clergy in those days foresaw this danger, and opposed innovations from apprehensions of it, I cannot say; it is certain that Abp. Tillotson, whom you allow zealous in the design of a comprehension, dissuaded Spanheim from publishing his treatise upon such a desirable union, about that time, in 1697. He observes, in a letter to him, with deep regret, “ that there are many on both sides, of our church, as well as among the dissenters, who know not the means or way of peace. I cannot therefore, says he, foresee what will at last be the issue of these pacific counsels. As
“ affairs

^a Abridgt. of the life of Baxter, p. 655.
hist. 1753. vol. 3. p. 45, 46.

^b Burn,

“ affairs now stand in England, I think no-
 “ thing of this kind should be attempted for
 “ the present; but that we ought to wait till
 “ the times grow more disposed to peace; a
 “ period, which if our brave King shall, through
 “ the divine assistance, meet with the success
 “ wished for by all good men, I presage is not
 “ far distant.”* But Tillotson lived not to see
 the king’s success so great, as to think this at-
 tempt seasonable. And you yourself might have
 seen cause to have expressed your thankfulness
 that no attempt was then made, instead of shew-
 ing nothing but ill humor.

Now indeed the times are altered in *this* res-
 pect: but are they not likewise altered in *others*?
 Would two thirds, would one third, or one sixth
 of the dissenters, conform now on the concessions
 proposed to be made then? Indeed has not a
 large and increasing part of them since that time
 fixed their separation on so very different a foot-
 ing, that they would slight these as trifles, and
 make demands of quite another nature? and be-
 tween the tenaciousness of the old dissenters and
 the wildness of the new, is it not too likely, that
 scarce any would be gained?

Besides, the nation and the parliament then
 considered religion as a matter of the greatest
 moment, and were strongly averse from extra-
 vagant changes; and therefore the sovereign
 might prudently favor moderate ones. But who
 can engage that the case would now be the same?
 that many would not through indolence, indis-
 ference, or timorousness, resolve to do nothing,
 however right; and others, from hatred of re-
 ligion or the clergy, from interest, from fond-
 ness of novelty, blind devotion to the name of
 liberty.

* Birch’s life of Tillotson, p. 252.

liberty, or mere love of sport, be ready to do any thing, however wrong? You indeed are extremely clear, that *the clergy can have no reason to doubt of the concurrence of the civil powers in the work of reformation:*⁸ But your proofs are somewhat curious. *Formerly the civil powers stood by the clergy, in all their perils, and once fell with them for a season.*⁹ And doth it follow, that those powers will permit them now to run into perils wantonly, or support them if they do? Another proof you give is, because *not above ten years since, a great churchman said the state seemed more in need of the support of the clergy than they of the state's.*¹ But in not much above ten pages afterwards, you appear to have a low opinion of that great churchman's judgement. And supposing him to have judged ever so rightly, yet the state might not be sensible that it needed their support in so great a degree, or might not be willing to make this return for it. You yourself say only, in a doubtful manner, *perhaps something more ought to have been ventured, in the reign of George the first and second, than the politicians of those times were willing to put to the hazard:*² which is confessing the backwardness of the ministers, and allowing, that possibly the caution of others might be justifiable: nor is it certainly known, whatever you may pretend, that the princes on the throne would have concurred.

But this plea you think, ought not to be made by the ruling clergy, *till the full proof is given to the world, by a fair and open trial, that their sincere and zealous endeavours for a further reformation, are actually controuled by the civil powers.*³ But why must it be an open trial? why must

⁸ P. xlv.⁹ P. xlv.¹ P. lxix.² P. xlv.

must their endeavours be *actually controuled*? Why may it not suffice that *the ruling clergy* inform themselves privately of the dispositions of those powers, without whom nothing can be either successfully or safely attempted? Why must they offend those powers, by forcing them *actually to controul their endeavours*, instead of yielding modestly to a signification that such endeavours will be discountenanced? Or though they would not, is it prudent to make proposals for the amendment of the ecclesiastical constitution, while multitudes are on the watch for that opportunity of destroying or impairing it? Such books as yours, sir, and such articles as we have continually in the news-papers, are grievous discouragements to what they would seem designed to promote; for they excite shrewd suspicions, that the real intention is not to reform the church, but to make it odious, by plausible and growing demands of what you yourselves know cannot be granted: like the mutinous soldiers under Flaccus, of whom Tacitus makes mention, who demanded many things, not with an expectation of having them granted, but as a pretext for their sedition. And had Flaccus, to gratify them, made ever so many concessions, he had obtained nothing from them, but more tumultuous demands of such things as they knew he must have refused them*.

You procede to inform such readers as will take your word, that *perhaps there is no law, in any protestant community, less defensible in a religious view, than that of a sacramental test for civil offices*†.

Hence one might think that you hold it more

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defensible

* — postulabant, non ut assequerentur, sed causam seditioni. Et Flaccus multa concedendo, nihil aliud effecerat, quam ut acius exposcerent, quæ sciebant negaturum. Tacit. Hist. lib. IV. § 19.

† P. xlvii.

defensible in a political view ; and you certainly must know, that churchmen, and clergymen in particular, far from being fond of a sacramental test, would be glad of any other effectual security in its place. But you, sir, insist on *equal and impartial liberty* in such a sense, that you would undoubtedly oppose any other test as vehemently as a sacramental one, which you assure us, *that the abilities of the inimitable Sherlock were found unequal to the task of supporting, against a writer vulnerable only in point of his conformity to a church, whose forms of discipline and government he had shewn, upon gospel principles, to be liable to so many important objections* *. The gentleness of this censure deserves commendation ; yet give me leave to wish, that you had been equally gentle where you had more cause ; and that all who maintain that writer's opinions, would take greater care to preserve themselves from being vulnerable on that account. But to go on : *The argument concerning a test law, you tell us, was now at an end*, for you do not vouchsafe to mention bishop Ellis on this occasion : *and in this distressful hour of despondency, things, on the part of the test men, were going on fast towards a state of desperation.* * But as I have neither been able to recollect this mournful state, nor to meet with any who doth, I cannot help thinking, that your imagination hath out-run your memory.

However, at length, one *champion more for the church* arose †, whom you procede to attack, as the only adversary left in the field. I shall not intermeddle in the defence of a person so abundantly much more able to answer for himself ; thinking it sufficient to have vindicated their characters from

* P. lii.

† P. i.

‡ P. li.

§ Ibid.

from your injurious aspersions, whose own eloquent tongues are silent in the grave, and cannot now defend themselves. This I have been enabled to do, by examining your historical *view of the steps taken to reform the church of England, after the settlement of it by Queen Elizabeth*; from which examination it appears, that the steps to reform the church of England (as you call it) did not regard her *doctrines*, but her *government or rites*; and were taken by men blameably disobedient, even by their own confession.

The first class objected only to ecclesiastical habits, though enjoined by the queen's authority, because the papists had administered in them. But if every thing must be rejected which they had used in their superstitious and idolatrous ministrations, why were not their pulpits and churches demolished also, to which the objectors succeeded without scruple; nay, on this principle, as king James told the commissioners, at the Hampton-court conference, such strict reformers must go barefooted, for papists wore shoes and stockings. And that the use of such habits was not sinful, their leaders, Humfreys and Sampson, acknowledged by their subscription under their hands, though they refused compliance in their practice.

The second step taken was by Cartwright, to introduce the discipline of Geneva, prudently
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† P. xxxiii.

‡ *Ministri in ecclesiâ Anglicanâ, in quâ Dei beneficio pura Christi doctrina et fidei evangelica prædicatio viget, quæque manifestam detestationem antichristianismi publicè profitetur, sine impietate uti possunt vestitum discrimine, publicâ auctoritate jam præscripto, tum in administratione sacrâ, tum in usu externo, modo omnis cultus et necessitatis opinio amoveatur.*

Omnia mihi licent, sed non omnia expediunt: omnia mihi licent, sed non omnia ædificant. L. Humfredus.

Tho. Sampson.

Life of Parker, lib. ii. p. 173.

enough calculated for that popular government, with the consent of the civil magistrate : but neither so prudent in a regal government, nor possible to be established without the consent of it. And the leader of this faction seriously lamented, on his death-bed, the troubles he had occasioned in the church, by the schism he had been the great fomentor of; and wished he was to begin his life again, that he might testify to the world the dislike he had to his former ways : and in this opinion he died.

The separatists went a step further towards reforming our church; for seeing it impossible to do any thing while the civil magistrate was allowed authority in affairs of ecclesiastic discipline, therefore Travers, in behalf of their discipline, expressly says, *hinc disciplina omnes reges et principes fasces suos submittere necesse est*. And others published abroad, that the magistrate had only authority to punish such as disobey *their* order; that he is in the number of those *qui facile debent patri se regi obtemperare*; that princes were subject to the presbytery-censures, reprehension, suspension, and excommunication; to which if they did not yield, *hinc feudorum*, that subjects, or any others, are freed from their oaths of fidelity. One of these, who honestly submitted to quit his preferment, rather than subscribe to our government and liturgy, while he judged them contrary to scripture, was Dr. J. Burgess; who was soon convinced of his error, and became a profest champion of both.

And when the prevailing principles of these men led them to procede one step further towards reforming

* Sir H. Yelverton. See Strype's Life of Whitgift, p. 666.

* Life of Whitgift, p. 259.

* Heylin's History of the Presbyt. p. 377.

reforming our church, by destroying the constitution in church and state, an event so probable to follow, that Archbishop Parker foresaw and foretold it, from the beginning of the opposition; William Prynne, who was a very active adversary to monarchy and episcopacy, and contributed much to the demolition of both, was so heartily convinced of the mischievous consequences of that demolition, that he became a considerable instrument in the restoration of both, and was received into the favor of Charles II.

These professed to agree with the Church of England in doctrines, and their reformation aimed only at her discipline, liturgy, and ceremonies. The dispute was no other than this, Whether the malecontents, in points not necessary to salvation, nor determined by scripture, should give laws to the state, or receive them from it. The bishops opposed their attempts, not as governors of the church, but as servants of the crown, in commission with lay lords and others, to defend that authority which the nation had consented to annex to it.

If the reader wonder what could induce you to give so malicious a misrepresentation of facts, at all times unseasonable, but at this time more particularly, you say *quite so*, you inform us, it is *the redoubled efforts of popery to enlarge her borders*; an inducement sufficient to set every honest protestant upon using all justifiable means in his power, to oppose them; but how false reports, abuse of the Church of England, and disuniting the members of it, can be such justifiable means, or likely to produce a successful opposition to popery, I cannot conceive; especially as it is reviving the

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very

^a Tindal's note to Rapin's History of England, vol. II
p. 644.

^{*} P. lxiv.

very means which popery made use of to destroy us, by dividing us, and recommending such principles as would facilitate the introduction of their tyrannical usurpations. Therefore Whitacre's character of Cartwright was, *verborum satis ille quidem lautam ac novam suppellectilem habet, rerum omnino nullam, quantum ego judicare possum* Deinde non modo perversè de principis in sacris ecclesiasticis auctoritate sentit, sed in papistarum etiam castra transfugit; à quibus tamen videri vult odio capitali dissidere. Verum nec in hac causâ ferendus, sed aliis etiam in partibus tela à papistis mutuatur.¹ And a member of the house of commons took notice of the agreement of the factions with the papists, in parliament, 1686: "I pray you, where-
 " in differ these men, in this case, from the papists?
 " the pope denieth the supremacy of princes; so
 " do, in effect, these. The pope yieldeth to them
 " only *potestatem facti, non juris; in personas, non*
 " *causas*; no more do our reformers, in this point.
 " The pope, where he entereth, doth abrogate all
 " such laws as any prince hath made, in church
 " matters, to his dislike; and so would these men
 " do with all laws, canons, constitutions, and or-
 " ders, heretofore made in the church."² But let us attend upon you in the account which you yourself give of the reasons inducing you to put the finishing hand to your work, and acquiesce in the publication of it.

Your encouragement to the first was, that then the two principal sees were filled with prelates, noted in subordinate stations for their attachment to civil and religious liberty, *in which one of them persisted to the last moment of his life*³; which perseverance was severed,

¹ Life of Whitgift, p. 67.

² Life of Whitgift. Records, No. xxxiv. p. 112.

³ P. lxiii.

severed, and which apostatized, you do not say : but unless some, who should know, have been greatly misled, neither of them patronized *The true and candid Disquisitions* ; and I conceive that book to be a main test of orthodoxy with you.

But a sudden change in the face of affairs quickly convinced you, that a publication of such sentiments would be now quite out of season¹. What this change was, you are not kind enough to inform the reader ; and I, for my part, cannot : but it seems, there is not only a considerable change in the public taste, but other circumstances, unfavorable to the cause of reformation, seem to dissuade an enterprise of this kind, for still more cogent reasons². All this is very mysterious ; nor is it less so, that others can give a better account why you published now, than you yourself can³. But whatever their inducements were, your principal one was, your observing the redoubled efforts of popery to enlarge her borders. It is to be hoped you will acquaint us, in some future edition of your work, what service against popery the publication of it, quite out of season, will be likely to do. But some writers complain of papists, not with design to hurt them, but others. *Popery*, you say, is not at the pains, as heretofore, to cover her march : It will be strange if printing the Confessional should make that march either slower or more secret. But some publick, and even clamorous notices of her progress, were received with surprising indifference, where one would have thought both interest and duty were concerned to remark and obstruct her passage. Publick and clamorous notices are frequently false ; and there is much room to suspect, that many false representations of the growth of popery have been published, merely in order to abuse the clergy for their pretended ne-

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¹ Ibid.² Ibid.³ P. lxiv.

glect of it. One ground of suspicion, amongst others, is, their being frequently so general and inaccurate, that no use can be made of them. For instance; what use can be made of the notice you give us here? When, and by whom, that was concerned to obstruct the progress of popery, were accounts of it received with such indifference? Whence do you infer this indifference? If you mean to insinuate, that the clergy, or the upper part of them, are guilty of it, what could they have done more, where there is any increase of popery, than they have done? Careful inquiries, I believe, and I have taken some care to be informed, have been made in most, if not all dioceses. The result of them, in London at least, where the principal mischief was apprehended to be done, though it is not, as far as can be judged, near so great, God be thanked, as some have imagined or pretended, have been laid before the government. In other places, where priests have been busy, warnings have been sent to them or their patrons, that proceeding to give trouble will not be safe: if these have been disregarded, application hath been made to the neighbouring justices, to exert their authority against them. This is all that clergymen, of whatever rank they are, can do, except by publick and private instruction. In the present age, multitudes will attend neither; and, in large parishes, numbers may be perverted, one after another, without a possibility of the minister's knowing it, as the first direction is, to have no recourse to him. All bishops, as far as I am able to learn, charge their clergy to do what they can in this respect; and in general they do it, perhaps as much as ever, where there is need. You say, indeed, that *their discourses on the subject are superficial* ^a; how far the catching dissipations of the

the age may have infected us, and occasioned us to remit, in some measure, the preparatory studies first, and due pains in composition afterwards, I cannot say; and in consequence, how deficient in matter our pulpit discourses may be: yet I believe they are not more so on the subject of popery than others. Would to God, both pastors and people did more conscientiously attend to their respective duties! But you say, *they omit the master-argument against it*. What that is, you avoid, as usual, to say distinctly; but your undoubted meaning is, that to preach against popery effectually, they must preach against their own church; and if they will do the latter, I fancy they may have your leave to let the former alone. But without deserting the principles of our own church, our writers have had the better of the argument, in their disputes with popery, ever since the reformation began; they obtained a fair victory over it, when all the influence of the crown was employed in its favour: the principal combatants against it then were churchmen, and good churchmen; and what our predecessors have done, I doubt not but our present clergy will be able to do again, when occasions shall call them forth. If you think otherwise on these points, you are so far much more favourable to popery than we are. Your notions, I believe, have made but few, if any, converts from the Church of Rome; and her priests need wish for nothing better, than for the people of this nation to believe, that we cannot stand against them, without going over to you. The confusion which your reformatations must introduce, would yield them a plentiful harvest. The manner in which you urge the necessity of them, and your treatment of the established clergy, especially your accusa-

tions of them, as indifferent about popery, or even well inclined to it, will give missionaries great advantages; nay merely your calling off the publick attention to a controversy amongst ourselves, when our vigilance ought to be united against them, is doing no small mischief: I do not say, you *design* that mischief: but you, and others like minded, ought to consider, and very conscientiously, the tendencies of your undertakings, and not follow the dictates of your piques and prejudices at all adventures.

You procede further in this matter, and quote a passage from Dr. Mosheim, which, though in your first edition you complain of want of precision in Mr. Maclaine's translation of the passage, and acknowledge you had not seen the original, yet, in your opinion, *certainly means, upon the whole, that the reformed churches have, in these latter days, shifted nearer to popery; and you cannot but think, we may safely trust his knowledge and integrity for the matter of fact, however he may be mistaken in accounting for it.* But in your second edition, you lay the blame on Dr. Mosheim, and wish he had been a little more explicit, with respect to these different denominations uniting their efforts in healing the breach, and diminishing the weight and importance of those controversies which separate them from the communion of the Church of Rome. And then you add, *It seems to me that he meant to say, that the reformed churches, by uniting their efforts to heal the breach among themselves, had diminished the weight—and consequently, that the reformed churches have, in these latter days, shifted nearer to popery.* I own, Sir, that I think with you, that if Dr. Mosheim meant to say what you would have him, he is not explicit enough for your purpose; but indeed he is very explicit against you; nor was it possible,

possible, that to an inquisitive man, who was hunting for *precision*, the original words should seem to mean the sense you wish to fix upon them; for they affirm, that the reformed churches live together in charity and friendship, and unite their efforts to heal the breach and diminish the weight and importance of the controversies *which divide those Christians who are separated from the communion of the Romish Church*. The words, which you did not care to give us, are at the bottom^a; from which it appears, that Dr. Mosheim does not affirm, that the reformed churches are shifted nearer to popery; but that they are uniting against it, by diminishing their own controversies among themselves. The reader must be astonished at such a perversion of the doctor's sense, after a cool deliberate examination of it: his translator, who might easily, in so long a work, through inadvertency, misunderstand his words in this sense, calls it with reason, *a strange and groundless aspersions*: yet you, after seeking for precision and explicitness, persist in the mistake, and bring arguments to prove, that Dr. Mosheim was right, in affirming what he does not affirm. Like that curious commentator on Aristotle, who, when his author had affirmed the soul was *ἀψύχον*, immaterial, mistaking it for *ἀνύχον*, brought a number of arguments

^a Hodie . . . amici inter se vivunt, et junctis id agunt viribus, ut pondera litium, quæ Christianos, à Romanâ communionē semotos, distinent, magis extenuentur et diminuantur. The translation which I have given is evidently the right one: not *which separate Christians from the Romish Communion*, for Christians in general are not separated from it, but only some Christians. And Mosheim seems to have in his view the words of a dissertation *De Consecrationibus Episcoporum Anglorum*, which Klorningius defended under him as president, wherein is mentioned, p. 61, *litium quæ protestantes distinent compositio*.

ments to prove the soul was a pipe. His blunder was innocent, yours is injurious ; so that you might have spared yourself the trouble of these additions to your Preface : as it first came out, you might appear only to have too hastily built on a passage in Mr. Maclaine, which he had mistaken ; in this second edition, you make yourself answerable for the misrepresentation of Dr. Mosheim.

However, you call our attention to a remarkable fact brought out on another occasion by Dr. Mosheim, but which fully justifies the observation above-cited*. Whatever it justifies, it cannot justify the observation cited as his, because he never made it ; but it will be sufficient for your purpose, if it justifies the observation you would father upon him ; I mean the approach of the reformed churches toward that of Rome. The fact you give us is, that Archbishop Wake formed a project of peace and union between the English and Gallican churches, founded upon this condition, that each of the two communities should retain the greatest part of their respective and peculiar doctrines†. Now certainly Archbishop Wake's project, in which it does not appear that more than one protestant, besides himself, was concerned, cannot fully justify any observation concerning the reformed churches in general, nor indeed concerning our own established church. But you hoped, at least, that it would justify your inveighing against the Archbishop. You own yourself not to know *what progress the Archbishop made in this transaction* ; and it does not appear, that in your first edition you were acquainted with any one particular of it, beyond what you found in Mr. Maclaine's translation

* P. lxxiv.

† Ibid.

‡ P. lxiv. 1st Edit. P. lxxxiv. 2 Edit.

tion of Mosheim, whose words are, *pacem cum ecclesiâ Gallicanâ, salvis utriusque partis sententiis plerisque, facere voluit*; and yet you have charged him with setting on foot, and openly avowing, a project and treaty for union with a popish church, and that with concessions in favor of the grossest superstition and idolatry; and are not ashamed to call him a pretended champion of the protestant religion: how weak a ground-work for so heavy an accusation! Archbishop Wake was a hearty and an able champion for protestantism, when it was least safe to be so, in the days of James II. and the papists would be very thankful to any author who would prove him to be a hypocrite: but they know and have felt him to be in earnest; and the name of *pretended champion* belongs rather to the man who would depreciate so eminently a *real one*. Were nothing more known of this matter, than the account which Mosheim hath given of it, we ought rather to think, that he or his informers had used expressions, somewhat too strong, than to dissent from Mr. Maclaine's opinion, that *the interests of the protestant religion could not be in safer hands than the Archbishop's*.

But in your second edition you tell us, that a worthy and learned person had lately suggested to you that Mosheim was most probably mistaken, in ascribing this project to Archbishop Wake; for that it appears from this Archbishop's article in the *Biographia Britannica*, that the project, in which Dr. Wake was concerned, was first started by the French doctors of the Sorbonne, and consequently was not formed by the Archbishop. Nor is the account in the said article at all more favorable to the condition mentioned by Mosheim: for instead of stipulating that "each community should retain the greatest part of their respective and peculiar doctrines," the

" Archbishop,

* Ibid. first Edit. et p. lxxv. 2d. Edit.

“ *Archbishop, according to his Biographer, constantly* “ maintained the justice and orthodoxy of
 “ every individual article of the Church of Eng-
 “ land, without making the least concession to-
 “ wards approving the ambitious pretensions of
 “ the church of Rome ;” *upon these grounds it is*
concluded that Mosheim was mistaken *. This, Sir,
 I think, is a just conclusion ; and you therefore
 ought to have retracted, in your second edition,
 those virulent reproaches against the Archbishop,
 which were grounded on misinformation ; but
 that is a piece of justice to which you cannot per-
 suade yourself. You reject, indeed very justly,
 the conjecture, which I believe no one ever made
 besides *the learned and worthy person* whom you
 mention, that Mosheim confounded the transac-
 tion between the French divines and Archbishop
 Wake, in 1718, with a project of Charles Leslie,
 in 1701 ; but you vainly hope that this will en-
 able you to make good your charge against the
 Archbishop. You say, the writer of his life, in
 the *Biographia*, *has left it highly probable, that he*
was the first mover in this project † ; and I see no
 cause to reproach him, if he really had been the
first mover, and taken occasion, from the contest
 between the pope and the Gallican church, on ac-
 count of the bull *Unigenitus*, in 1717, to press that
 church to throw off its dependence on the pope,
 (from which would open to that church a fair
 prospect, that further reformation in doctrine and
 worship would follow, as it did in our own) and
 to unite with us to such a degree, as might have
 been very useful for our mutual support, and have
 born some resemblance to the state in which we
 are with the other anti-papistical churches. But
 this appears not to have been the fact ; and the
 account in the *Biographia* contradicts that given
 by

* P. lxxxiv. &c. note.

† P. lxxviii. notes.

by Mosheim, unless the Archbishop might be the first mover, and yet the doctors of the Sorbonne be the first starters of it. But what are your evidences of the pretended *high probability*? The first is this; *Mr. Beauvoir, in a letter to the Archbishop, December 11, 1717, which is an answer to one of the Archbishop's, November 27, (28,) tells him, "That Dr. Du Pin, and some other doctors of the Sorbonne, wished for an union with the Church of England:" now, say you, can any man be certain that Beauvoir mentioned this without some previous occasion given him, by the Archbishop's letter, for such conversation with the Sorbonne doctors?* But if no man could be certain of it, doth that make a high probability of the contrary? It is, however, very certain, from inspection of the Archbishop's autograph, that it gave not the least occasion for that conversation, but relates entirely to the Benedictine edition of St. Chrysostome, to Martene's Thesaurus Anecdotorum, and Moreri's Dictionary. Indeed Mr. Beauvoir's letter plainly mentions this conversation of his with them, as what would be news to the Archbishop. But you observe further, that *there is an &c. in this copy of Mr. Beauvoir's letter, very suspiciously placed, as if to cover something improper to be disclosed.* Now the very same &c. was, I presume, in Mr. Beauvoir's original letter; for it is in his own copy of it: so that, if any thing was designed to be concealed by it, the Archbishop himself was the first person from whom it was to be concealed. But what is there suspicious in the placing of it? "They talked as if the whole kingdom was to appeal to the future general council, &c. they wished for an union with the Church of England, as the most effectual means to unite all the Western churches." How could you fail to see that the &c. hath not the least possible relation

tion to the union? The letter goes on thus; "Dr. Du Pin desired me to give his duty to your Grace, upon my telling him, that I would send you an arrest of the parliament of Paris relating to him." And there is not the least appearance of any intercourse between the Archbishop and the Doctor, before this. *Well, but in answer to this letter, his Grace made handsome mention of Dr. Du Pin; and had we but his answer, it might probably have discovered, what the Biographer did not want we should know, the share which Dr. Wake had in forming the project of an union.* Here again, Sir, you guess with your usual charity, but very unhappily. The answer is dated January 2, 1717; that is, 1717 $\frac{1}{2}$; there is not a syllable in it relative to an union; and the only words relative to Dr. Du Pin are these: "I am much obliged to you for making my name known to Dr. Du Pin; he is a gentleman by whose labours I have profited these many years: and I do really admire, how it has been possible for one man to publish so much, and yet so correctly, as he has generally done. I desire my respects to him; and that, if there be any thing here, whereby I may be serviceable to him, he will freely command me." Such was the Archbishop's *handsome mention* of him, suitable to his own politeness; and it evidently shews, that till then there had never been any communication between them. Yet these are all the proofs that you give of the *high probability* that the Archbishop was the first mover in this affair. Dr. Mosheim probably grounded his report on the authority of Kiörningius, in the tract abovementioned, who relates this transaction, and speaking of the Archbishop, says, *leges simul pacis, quas ipse conceperat animo, judicio eorundem subji-cebat*; and subjoins, in a note, *hæc—partim ex testibus fide dignis Lutetiæ Parisiorum accepimus.* And

And these *creditable witnesses* might originally receive the like account from Du Pin himself; and yet it was a misinformation; for by a letter of Mr. Beauvoir's we learn, that "Dr. Du Pin left behind him an account of this transaction or correspondence, which he intended to communicate to a very great man; but first shewed it to Mr. Beauvoir, who observed to Dr. Du Pin, that it was written as if the Archbishop had first expressed a desire of a correspondence with him, and of an union with the two churches; whereas it was the Doctor who did this. Du Pin owned it, and promised to rectify the mistake, but was prevented by death." Thus, Sir, Dr. Mosheim is very excusable in the account he gives of this transaction, though it be a misrepresentation; and Mr. Maclaine is justified in his opinion of Archbishop Wake, "That he could not form any project of peace and union with a Roman catholick church, the terms of which would have reflected on his character as a negociator." You tenaciously retain the mistake, and reject the charity of both. And though admonished of the mistake by your learned and worthy friend, who referred you to the *Biographia* for better information, you refuse that information with abuses on the giver of it, and wildly endeavour to defend yourself by guesses, void of all truth and reason. You proceed, *If his Grace did not actually bring forth the project, he took upon him the pious care of nursing it.* How far this invidious representation is from truth, the extracts already made, and presently to be made, will shew. But *he accepted the treaty, at least it was not broken off by him.* And could he have done a thing more likely to serve the Protestant interest, in the then circumstances of the church of France, than to accept it in the manner

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that

that he did ? It was broken off by the zealots for the court of Rome, who saw, what all persons may that will, how great a blow the success of it would have given to their party : yet the Archbishop, in one sense, broke it off, by maintaining the justice and orthodoxy of every article of the church of England. But, say you, *this he might do, yet give up some of them for the sake of peace.* Now, on the contrary, he expressly declared, in his letters, that he would give up none of them for the sake of peace with the French church.

In a letter of his to Mr. Beauvoir, August 30, 1718, he says, “ If, consistently with our own establishment, we can agree upon a closer union with one another, well ; if not, we are as much, and upon as good grounds, a free and independent church as they are——with the Doctor’s Com-munitorium I shall never comply. The matter must be put into another method ; and, whatever they think, they must alier some of their doctrines and practices too, or an union with them can never be effected. Of this, as soon as I have a little more leisure, I shall write my mind, as inoffensively as I can, to them, but yet freely too. If any thing is to come of this matter, it will be the shortest method I can take of accomplishing it, to put them in the right way : if nothing (as I believe nothing will be done in it) ’tis good to leave them under a plain knowledge of what we think of ourselves and our church ; and to let them see, that we neither need nor seek the union proposed, but for their sake as well as our own ; or rather, neither for theirs nor ours, but in order to the promotion of a catholick communion (as far as it is possible) among all the true churches of Christ——I have no design, but what is consistent with the ho-
nor

"nor and freedom of our English church, and
 "with the security of that true and sound doctrine
 "which is taught in it, and from which no conside-
 "ration shall ever make me depart." You ask,
 Does the biographer say, that the Archbishop made
 no concessions with respect to these articles? He hath
 led some people, it seems, to think so, by his artful
 manner of expressing himself. But if this has really
 been the case, the treaty could not have gone on a step
 further. Concessions must be made on both sides, or
 peace and union could not ensue. I see no necessity
 for this: treaties are often carried on, for a long
 time, without concessions on both sides, or perhaps
 on either. In this case, the Gallican church had
 appealed from the pope to a general council; and
 on that occasion some of the best and ablest men
 amongst them sued for an union with the church
 of England, and made some concessions; but
 the Archbishop made none, as his own testimony
 above witnesses, unless you call the following in-
 stance a *concession*, which is all, that I can find, that
 was offered: "If Christ has committed any po-
 "wer to the pope, above other bishops, let the
 "records be produced; let him prove his right,
 "we scruple not to yield. If general councils
 "have allowed any prerogative to the bishop of
 "the imperial see (although the empire falling,
 "that prerogative may be justly supposed to have
 "fallen with it) yet, as far as respects myself,
 "saving always the rights of kingdoms, the liber-
 "ties of particular churches, and the honor of
 "bishops, if we agree in other points, he is wel-
 "come for me to enjoy his primacy such as it is;
 "I envy him not precedence, or the empty title
 "of honor. But to have domination over other
 "churches—is what we could not bear, nor ought

G 2

"you."

"you." The Archbishop might hope that Du Pin, who had yielded several things, would yield more; but indeed this correspondence deserves not the name of *treaty*: proposals were made only on Du Pin's side, on which the Archbishop expressed to Mr. Beauvoir his disapprobation, and proposed nothing to either of the doctors in return, but that they should throw off the authority of the pope entirely; hoping that when this was done, the two churches might come to agree about other matters, as far as was necessary. For though he speaks of Du Pin, about his *Commonitorium*, in general terms of civility, yet he enters into no one particular. But you argue, *the Archbishop must have made concessions, because the letters, on both sides, were sent to Rome, as so many trophies gained from the enemies of the church. But upon what could these trophies be erected, but upon the concessions made to the church in the Archbishop's letters?* This is but arguing against fact; and if the fact had not been known, would rather have made against you: for men do not usually erect trophies of spoils taken from friends that were in treaty and yielding to them, but, as you express it, *enemies*. When the poet describes the trophies which Jupiter hung up in Sicily, after his war with the giants, he does not

* Si quid ei (papæ) potestatis supra alios episcopos Christus commiserit, proferantur tabulæ, jus evincatur, cedere non recusamus. Si quam prærogativam ecclesiæ concilia sedis imperialis episcopo concesserint, (et si cadente imperio etiam eâ prærogativâ excidisse merito possit censi) tamen quod ad me attinet, servatis semper regnorum juribus, ecclesiarum libertatibus, episcoporum dignitate, modo in cæteris conveniatur, per me licet, suo fruatur qualicumque primatu; non ego illi locum primum, non inasem honoris titulum invideo. At in alias ecclesias dominari — nec nos unquam ferre potuimus, nec vos debetis.

Epist. Dno Ellies Du Pin, Oct. 1, 1718.

not say he kept them as monuments of their *concessions*, but of their dangerous *opposition*. “ The
 “ prodigious strength of the enemy, and evidences
 “ of irreconcilableness that even threaten still”.
 Could nothing then, but concessions from the Archbishop, make the court of Rome consider those letters in the light of trophies gained from the enemies of the church? Could they not think it a great triumph, that they had obliged Du Pin’s party to yield them up, as a token of *their* submission, and that they had defeated the Archbishop’s design of engaging the French church to assert its liberty? If he made concessions, where are they? Why have not the partisans of Rome published authentick copies of them? But, say you, *if he made none, how came the French divines to be sensible of his catholick benevolence?* From the strong assurances of it, which do honor to his letters; from the esteem and pity for them which he there shews, and his earnest desire of their recovering the freedom to which they were entitled. In short, these trophies were wrested out of the hands of the French by the prevalence of the pope’s supremacy: the Archbishop kindly lent them arms to resist it, which, instead of using, they tamely delivered up to the Roman pontiff. What shadow of proof is here of the Archbishop’s concessions? They may be trophies in the court of Rome, to shew the danger they escaped; but they will be monuments, at the same time, to the Archbishop’s honor, of his concern for the protestant interest, and the religious liberties of mankind, so long as the knowledge of them shall continue.

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— hic prodigiosa gigantum
 Tergora dependent, et adhuc crudele minantur
 Affixæ truncis facies.

De Rapt. Prof. lib. iiii. 339.

You take it for granted, that *before the Archbishop could bring this transaction of his to bear, it must have passed through other hands*^b. I hope you yourself now see, at least every one else will see, that it was no transaction of the Archbishop's. The assurances, therefore, with which we are favored, *that then it would have been lost labor to solicit the consent of a majority, even of the church of England, to this union, are of no other service than to introduce the good-natured insinuation, that now it may not be lost labor.*

It ought to be observed further, that no Englishman, of his time, had so large and so friendly a correspondence with the foreign protestant churches as Archbishop Wake had ; which alone might suffice to shew, that his correspondence with the milder members of the Gallican church, (for he had none with others) proceeded from a principle of charity, not a bias towards popery.

But, determined not to spare him, you object to him, that *he opposed the repeal of the schism bill ; that though his conduct was friendly to reformation, at the trial of Sacheverel, yet he was not then Archbishop of Canterbury ; that it is well known what alteration an elevated station makes^c ; that bishops are as apt to be intoxicated with power and pre-eminence as other mortals, and have too often been tempted to extend their dominion beyond its established bounds*^d. He protested against the schism bill in 1714, as an hardship upon the dissenters ; which was shewing a friendly regard to them in opposition to the court, and consequently against his own private interest, as matters then stood. Four years after, indeed, when it was proposed to repeal the schism act, and that against occasional conformity together, he disapproved the proposal, and gave his

^b P. lxxxiv.^c P. lxxxvii.^d P. lxxxviii.

his reasons in the house of lords. But his objection to the repeal of the former was only, that it was needless, as no use had been made, or was likely to be made of that act; so that probably he would have consented, without hesitation to rescind it, had nothing further been endeavoured at the same time. But considering what sort of spirit was then shewn, by the dissenters and others, it ought not to be matter of great wonder if he was afraid, that from the repeal of the other act, considerable damage might follow to the church over which he presided: and even supposing his fears to have been excessive, or quite groundless, yet certainly they were pardonable, in a man who never did, or aimed to do, any thing disagreeable to the dissenters in any other affair; and who, in this, had the concurrence of some of the greatest and wisest of the English lords, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Cowper, and others, who were well known to bear the dissenters no ill-will; and also of the Earl of Ilay, among the Scotch, though a professed presbyterian. Instead of being *intoxicated with power and pre-eminence*, after he was Archbishop, he made less use and less shew of either than perhaps any of his predecessors had done: and in what instances he or his successors *have attempted to extend their domination*, a phrase which no one could employ seriously in this case but yourself, *beyond its established bounds*, remains for you to unfold.

You have now done with Archbishop Wake, but by no means with the church of England. Mr. Maclaine, you admit, must be better informed concerning the state of religion abroad, than we of this island: and (N. B.) *if he says, on good grounds, that the reformed churches were never at such a distance from the spirit and doctrine of the*

church of Rome, you rejoice, and are less alarmed at the contrary appearances at home, where, you say, Mr. Maclaine will allow us to be competent judges in our turn*. Some may be competent, and yet wilfully blind and perverse, judges. You confess that even Morley and Ward were frightened by the formidable progress which popery was making during the reign of King Charles II. into an appearance, at least, of desiring to make room for the nonconformists in the church†. Are then the present clergy higher churchmen, less afraid of popery, more vehement against dissenters, than Morley and Ward? It cannot be expected, indeed, that you should have the candor to say any good of them voluntarily; but surely you will not refuse, when called upon, to acknowledge, that they have more moderate notions of church authority, are less fond of forms and ceremonies, are greater friends to liberty of conscience and toleration, and are milder in their behaviour towards nonconformists, than their predecessors were. These are notorious facts, and are they symptoms of an inclination to popery? or might it not have been justly hoped, that the clergy would have met with kinder treatment from some persons, in return for them? You mention several doctrines of popery, transubstantiation, purgatory, saint-worship, relicks, masses for the dead, penances‡; have you cause to suspect the clergy of proneness to any of these notions or practices? or to what other parts of popery do you find an increasing bias amongst them?

Without explaining yourself on any thing of this nature, you say, it hath been lamented of late, that the zeal both of pastors and people, in the church of England, against popery, is visibly declined§. And so is their zeal against infidelity, against quakerism, against

* P. lxxxvii. † P. xxxiii. ‡ P. xc. § P. lxxxviii.

against vice ; yet, I hope, you do not think we are about to turn papists, and infidels, and quakers, and profligates, at the same time. There is a very perceivable decay of seriousness in religion ; but no more in those articles which distinguish us from the church of Rome, than in others. You add, that *papists, animated by an influx of Jesuits, open publick mass-houses, and affront the laws, not without insult on some who endeavour to check their influence.* A melancholy truth ! which those who have authority to punish, or prevent such enormities, and connive at them, would do well to consider. But civil magistrates alone have that authority ; not the pastors or people of the church of England in general : the clergy are to confute popery, as a false religion, and to complain of attempts in its favor as dangerous to the state : they do both, and they can do no more.

But you say further, that *we were told, not long ago, with the utmost coolness and composure, in a pamphlet written expressly in defence of some proceedings in a certain episcopal society, and, as is conjectured, by somebody in no ordinary station, that popish bishops go about here, and exercise every part of their function, without offence and without observation**. Now supposing the conjecture to be true, concerning the writer of that pamphlet, he is a person too well known and distinguished, on many other occasions, to be hurt by an accusation so maliciously picked out of two or three words, wrested to a sense different from what was intended, as evidently appears from the scope and tenor of the context ; and the world will do him so much justice as to acknowledge, that no other man, of his time, hath given more incontestable or stronger proofs of his zeal against popery. But, whoever

wrote

wrote the pamphlet, is not the fact true, that neither members of the church of England nor dissenters have, in a long course of years, taken any offence at popish bishops for going about, quietly and privately, to exercise every part of their episcopal functions? Indeed is it commonly so much as known *when* they do it, though it must be known that they do it sometimes? Where then was the crime of asserting a notorious fact, with no other design than of drawing from it this one conclusion, that therefore protestant bishops might also, without offence and without observation, go about to exercise their functions in his Majesty's North-American colonies? If the fact had been false, the only harm would have been, that this argument, in favor of American bishops, was a weak one: but, if it be true, give me leave to ask, whether it is not shameful, that they who can bear popish bishops to reside in Old England, cannot bear protestant ones to take occasional journeys to New England; or even to live in the neighbouring episcopal provinces of Great-Britain? Is this the spirit of liberty or persecution? and can we be sure how far that spirit might go, if it had power? You are further displeased with the answerer of Dr. Mayhew's observations, for alluding to this fact *with coolness and composure*. But why so? some writers are endued with the gift of pursuing their argument without being troubled with any disorderly passions. I wish they who have it not would study their manner, and learn to follow so good an example. The author of the Answer is there pleading for the admission of two or more bishops into our episcopal American colonies, with leave to visit occasionally the other colonies also; but with no other powers, in either, than to confirm such persons of the church of England as should

should desire it, to ordain ministers for them, and to inspect the conduct of those ministers afterwards. A part of his plea is in these words :
 “ Moravian bishops are authorized by law to live
 “ and act as such, where they will, in our plantations. Popish bishops reside here, and go about
 “ to exercise every part of their function, without
 “ offence and without observation : dissenting
 “ ministers reside here, and hold their meetings
 “ for ordinations, and whatever purposes they think
 “ fit, and these assemblies give us no umbrage.
 “ What we desire in New England is much less :
 “ that a bishop may, not reside there, but resort
 “ thither, from time to time, to officiate amongst
 “ those of our own communion.” This is not saying, that popish bishops *ought* to reside here, and exercise every or any part of their functions ; but only alledging, that in fact they do, without offence, and without observation ; and arguing from thence, that protestant bishops may very inoffensively travel about New England, to exercise their function also. You cannot deny the justness of this conclusion, unless your zeal for liberty of conscience, and abhorrence of popery, *strongly incline* you to judge, that English bishops are less entitled to a toleration among dissenters, than popish bishops amongst ourselves. The writer of the pamphlet had no call to shew himself offended at what he never heard had given offence to any one besides, either churchman or dissenter. If it hath given any, undoubtedly, as before observed, this part of the argument will be something the weaker for it, but no farther harm is done : the rest hath strength sufficient.

You call *this a circumstance*, whether you mean popish bishops exercising their functions without offence, or the mentioning it with coldness, I know not,

not, that can no otherwise be accounted for than upon the supposition, that the two hierarchies are growing daily more and more into the resemblance of each other; which supposition is indeed necessary for the support of the point, in proof of which this notable fact is employed. Now it is employed only *à fortiori*, that since the journeys of popish bishops through England give no offence, the journeys of protestant bishops through New England will, or need, give none. Whether the two hierarchies are growing daily more or less alike to each other, makes nothing to the purpose; I heartily wish, what you say without intending it, that the Romish is growing liker to ours; ours, I trust, will never grow liker to theirs. But you seem desirous, with your usual charity and candor, to make it believed, that the writer under consideration had approved, not only the journeys of the popish priests to exercise their episcopal functions amongst those of their own communion, which that writer hath not done; but the labors of the popish missionaries, to make proselytes which it was impossible for him to do: for it can be with no other view that you make mention of *the complaisance with which we have left popery to go about and perform all her functions, without offence and without observation*¹. Dr. Mayhew had made the same, I hope not wilful, but palpable, mistake before; and Mr. Apthorp had confuted it²; which confutation, Sir, was sent you, from a persuasion that possibly you might be convinced, in so plain a case. Not very long after, a letter appeared in a news-paper³, signed *Homologistes*, a name somewhat akin to *Confessional*, written in the bitterest and

¹ P. xxxviii.

² Review of Dr. Mayhew's Remarks, p. 10, 11.

³ St. James's Chronicle, June 14, 1766.

and most unchristian spirit imaginable, representing the exercise of ecclesiastical functions here by popish bishops as the effect of a *slumbering policy*, which had lately taken place in our church, and occasioned the late growth of popery, though they have been exercised, in the same manner, ever since the reformation; representing *the good people of England as perfectly astonished* at the discovery of this matter, though every one, of the least reflection must always have been sure of it; speaking of the proposal for bishops to officiate amongst the members of the church of England in our colonies, as a plan for proselyting the rest to episcopacy; and as a high-church scheme of despotism, adopted by the then late Tory ministry, along with the stamp act, for *the humiliation of America*. There are some spirits in the world, who, unless they are in actual possession of despotism themselves, are daily haunted with the apprehension of being subject to it in others; and who seem to speak and act under the strange persuasion, that every thing short of persecution against what they dislike must terminate in the persecution of themselves. As it is a miserable thing to be always dreaming of spectres, and terrified with imaginary apparitions: we ought heartily to pity those who are troubled with a constitution subject to such delusions, or to a disposition malicious enough to incline them to deceive others with them. And the scheme of episcopal despotism in America is the vainest phantom that ever idle visionary created to fright himself with, or artful juggler conjured up to scare others: A scheme that carries nothing more than has been already fully explained, and was formed and approved above fifty years ago by churchmen, as friendly towards dissenters as any had ever been; and had
not

not the least connexion with the stamp-act, nor ever received any particular encouragement from the ministry which promoted that act. And what can that writer's Christian charity be, that permitted him to treat the seriousness and mildness, with which the proposal was recommended, as only a *mask of piety and moderation, which hard necessity* obliged the recommenders to put on; and to slight all their reasons for it as *poor sophistry*?

After these invectives, Homologites proceeds to argue. And here he first refers to a newspaper, which I have not seen, for the number of popish bishops in England, and their importance in proselyting; and then he adds, that *they cannot exercise any part of their function while any restraint is put upon their inferior clergy*; for part of their function is directing them to make proselytes, and confirming these proselytes. To this it needs only be answered, that their stated number, for a long time past, is well known to have been only four: that if of late they have been increased, (which I conceive they have not,) or been more busy in perverting protestants, there is good cause to stop such proceedings: that the private directions of their bishops to their priests cannot be restrained, because they are private; but the attempts of either to make converts, as far as they can be known, are very just matter both of observation and correction: that therefore it was never meant to say, that such *invasive* exercises of their function gave no offence; but that the *ordinary* exercise of it, towards persons originally of their own communion, did not. And if we had bishops in America, the ordinary and chief, if not sole, exercise of their function would be towards persons originally of our communion. Indeed only three or four of them, and they residing
only

only in provinces already episcopal, could do little, if any thing more, to win over dissenters, than is now done by other clergymen residing there : and yet were they to persuade many to conformity, the case would be very different from that of conformity to the church of Rome. American episcopalians, to say the least, would not be worse subjects of Great-Britain than American presbyterians or congregationalists. But as for papists, I agree entirely with Mr. Apthorp, that “ *were none permitted to inhabit the king’s dominions, they would have no wrong done them, their principles being so inconsistent with those of our civil government.*” Yet I had rather they should not be put to this inconvenience, if they will but abstain from tampering with our people. And I agree with him also, that “ *while they are permitted, they should enjoy such exercise of their religion as can be allowed them with safety to ourselves.*” So far, and no farther, both their bishops and their priests may *exercise every part of their function, without offence and without observation.* Since Homologistes’ letter, you have, in the preface to your second edition, p. xxxviii. &c. undertaken your own defence against the charge that you have misrepresented these words, in p. 36, 37. [it should be 37, 67.] of your first preface. And you would seem doubtful what the misrepresentation, designed to be charged upon you, was ; though it was evidently this, that you intended to represent the words in question as favoring popery ; which they do not. This has been fully proved ; and therefore your long answer is no defence at all. If, instead of saying, *every part of their function*, it had been said, *every beforementioned part of their function*, (which is undeniably the meaning,) there had

had been no possibility of such misrepresentation ; but it served your purpose then, of raising an odium ; and your apology serves the purpose now, both of escaping under the cover of a multitude of words, and also of introducing an intimation, that possibly something may be found in the office of consecration of bishops, which would give umbrage to the dissenters of New-England, &c. and if it can possibly be found, I dare say you will find it ; but I wonder where. Persons indeed may *take* offence at any thing ; but that office *gives* them no ground for it in the least. After all, you cannot leave the subject without adding Dr. Mayhew's opinion, that Mr. Apthorp's Review did not merit a reply ; and his intelligence, that even the zealots of the episcopal party in America thought it of consequence only as it was the last word. Now I confess that Dr. Mayhew could have answered it ; for he could answer every thing ; and so can you. But he was ill-informed of the judgement of others ; and had he followed the serious and friendly advice of his adversary, p. 62, he would have altered his own. But he persisted to the last, as far as appears, in the sinful disposition of slighting it. I heartily wish you may not.

Of the dissenters in general, you hope and believe, as we do, charitably ; yet you point out one of them of no small note, as it should seem, in whose eyes popery hath been divested of its terrors by the distribution of the loaves and fishes. Whether this be really so, or whether your own eyes are so diseased, as to represent to you every one, whom you do not like, as favoring the church of Rome, I leave the dissenters to inquire.

You

You proceed to examine *what popery hath done to entitle herself to this complaisance?* But as all the instances of any designed complaisance which you have given are proved to be purely imaginary, and entirely void of truth, as far as the clergy are concerned, it would be absurd to follow you in considering what inducements to them there could be. In your pathetick exhortations to vigilance against popery we heartily join; and hope your malignant insinuations to the discredit of the church of England will not slacken that vigilance, though they are evidently calculated to lessen the good effects of it.

And now, drawing towards a conclusion, you suppose yourself to be asked a very material question: *What hath all this to do with subscription to articles of religion, and the establishment of confessions of faith and doctrine in protestant churches?* Certainly thus much; that when you have defamed them *all*, you may promise yourself to be better heard in decrying those truths which they have *all* approved. But you go deeper into the matter, and observe, that *religious impositions in protestant societies not warranted by scripture,*^a and yet made conditions of preferment, tempt persons to submit to them without examining them; or although perhaps they are dissatisfied with them, that either they *take up with flimsy casuistry in favor of them*, or *repose themselves on the authority of the church*; and that in either case they are in a train which would lead them with equal security to acquiesce in popery. Now protestant churches never impose any thing without thinking, not only that that they are *warranted by scripture* to impose it, but that the imposition is, on one account or another, of importance and requisite

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quisite

quisite. Yet be it never so well warranted, the persons required to submit to it may think it unwarranted, and be led into as much temptation by it as if it were really unwarranted. The danger therefore, which you alledge, belongs to *all* confessions of faith; and accordingly you are against *all*; though you would now and then appear to be only against *some*. And further, they alone are liable to be tempted thus into popery by confessions, who assent to them without being satisfied about them. You may possibly apprehend the number of such to be great; but we may with more charity, and I hope with more justice, apprehend it to be small; and consequently, the danger to be small. Doubtless care should be taken, as far as it conveniently can, to avoid laying this temptation in the way of persons; but how far it conveniently can, each society must judge for itself. Societies may be greatly to blame in requiring the profession of too much, and individuals are certainly not less to blame in professing more than they believe. But the only questions before us at present are: Doth the fault of making such confessions incline them in any considerable degree to popery? and even if it doth, Will abolishing all confessions be a security against popery? You describe these poor men as in a wretched state of mind; and no wonder. *They must be tender, you say, of asserting Christian liberty, on the peril of being reproved by their own hearts.* But surely their own hearts would reprove them still more, were they to speak or act against it. To quiet their uneasiness, you think they must run into a *profligate pursuit of affluence, power, and dignity, at any rate*: yet numbers, who are conscious of *having*
done

done wrong in some one particular, strive to quiet themselves by the contray method, of doing wrong in no more. But supposing part of them to become profligates, mere disdain of folly and absurdity, or mere concern for interest and reputation, may withhold some of them from shewing that *popery and protestantism* are upon a level with them. Others may be indifferent about them, or even, upon trying occasions, prefer the worst. But experience proves this to happen extremely seldom. And how would the case be mended if all confessions were laid aside? Not only persons void of zeal for protestantism, but full of zeal against it, might then come into church preferments without the least difficulty, and preach up popery in our pulpits with the utmost freedom. An admirable contrivance, it must be owned, for stopping its progress! such a one as, from the tendency of your performance, I might venture to assure you, that were you to accuse yourself at a popish confessional of being the author of it, if a Jesuit, who knew the world, happened to fill the chair, you would obtain immediate absolution, without penance.

You have written this preface as a preparation to your general attack upon the faith and doctrines of the church of England; hoping, that by representing the governours and teachers of it as opposing *all* reformation, and that from motives of lucre and power inconsistent with Christian liberty, and even with common honesty, you might unfairly prejudice the reader against its faith and doctrines: But when it appears that no reformation of faith and doctrines was intended, but a change of discipline and rituals inconsistent with the civil, as well as ecclesiastical constitution,

tion, tending to subject princes, as well as their people, to a spiritual tyranny, from which the first reformers had waded through seas of blood to rescue them; and that the champions of our church afterwards, as you are pleased in contempt to call them, who labored to secure the liberty they had attained, have been treated by you with much undeserved reproach; your preparation must reasonably have a tendency, contrary to what you expected, not much in favor of a scheme calculated to introduce a general state of confusion, which followed the attempts you have been recommending. A desire of attending you closely, as it hath hitherto led, so it may hereafter lead me, in the examination of your book, to be less methodical than I could wish, intermingling historical matters with doctrinal. The former indeed are in themselves of no great consequence to your professed principal point, viz. the lawfulness of requiring assent to articles of faith before admission to the ministry; yet you have thought it for the interest of your argument, to weave them together in such a manner, with a view of prejudicing your readers all the way, that I cannot sufficiently guard against your artifices, without examining facts when I meet with them; you may therefore expect, as soon as my health and many avocations will give me leisure to examine the principles of your book, the respect of a second address, from one who wishes you knowledge of the truth and salvation in Christ Jesus.

ERRATA.

Page 5, line 26, for *meanings* read *meanings*
 70, — 14, for *for* read *for*
 Ibid. — 25, for *1685* read *1685*
 71, — 4, for *true* read *true*
 84, — 5, for *an* read *an*
 85, — 19, for *priests* read *priests*

F I N I S.

SECOND
LETTER

TO THE
AUTHOR
OF THE
CONFESSIONAL;

CONTAINING
REMARKS
ON THE
FIVE FIRST CHAPTERS
of that BOOK.

h. with the first letter.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WHISTON, at BOYLE'S HEAD, and
B. WHITE, at HORACE'S HEAD, in Fleet-street;
And J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

M.DCC.LXVIII.

CONFESSIO
A. U. T. L. O. R.
TO THE
CONFESSIO



THE
CONFESSIO

THE
CONFESSIO

THE
CONFESSIO
MCCCLXXII

ERRATA.

Page 2, Line 19, after *And* add *be*.

- 40, l. 7, for *instruments* read *interests*.
- 68, l. 23, dele *and the people's consciences*.
- 71, l. 22, for *unseasonable* r. *unreasonable*.
- 72, l. 19, after *one* r. *church*.
- 73, l. 18, for *ordinate* r. *co-ordinate*.
- ibid. l. 23, for *and* r. *if not*.
- 76, l. 26, after *unalterable* add *His faith*.
- 82, l. 14, after *only* insert *imply*.
- 105, l. penult, for *too* r. *two*.
- 134, at bottom, for *Eng.* r. *Eng*.
- 142, l. 8, for *principle* r. *principal*.
- 149, l. 29, for *need* r. *needed*.
- 155, l. 14, before *another* insert *one*.
- 162, l. 29, for *agreeble* r. *agreeable*.
- 168, l. 27, for *point* r. *points*.
- 173, l. 1, for *despised* r. *despise*.
- 174, l. 14, for *friend* r. *friends*.
- 188, l. 13, for *text* r. *last*.

ERL A

SECOND LETTER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

CONFSSIONAL.

REVEREND SIR,

I Now wait on you, according to promise, to inquire whether subscription to articles of religion, and the establishment of confessions of faith and doctrine, in protestant churches, be justifiable or not.

You say it is not ; because, in so
CHAP. I. doing, the protestants forsook their own principles. And, to prove this point, you lay down, according to your fancy, *such principles as you say they went upon when they first withdrew from the communion of the church of Rome.* I say, according to your fancy, because you have not informed us in what books of theirs such principles are declared, nor do I know where to find them. According to their known principles, as published in their writings, such establishment is not only justifiable,

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but necessary. But I desire no more credit to be given to my assertions, without proof, than repeated experience has taught me is due to yours. This being laid as the corner-stone in your building, I shall pay the greater attention to it.

The protestant principles, from which you would prove the unjustifiableness of established confessions of faith and articles of religion, are thus described by you: *Jesus Christ hath, by his gospel, called all men unto liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*^a I no where find that the first protestants understood this *glorious liberty* to mean a discharge from all human authority in matters of religion. Luther, in his treatise on *Christian liberty*, in 1520, observes, that, 'there are many who abuse this liberty, ' thinking they are hereby discharged from all ' restraint, and assert their Christian freedom in ' nothing but in their contempt of human ceremonies and ordinances.' And tells us, 'that the ' free Christian observes human injunctions; not ' indeed as necessary to salvation, but in obedience to ecclesiastical governours, the society of ' which he is a member, or the magistrate under ' whom he lives, or as an example to his neighbour.'^b Calvin, in his *Institutions*, complains, 'that seditious men and cavillers misrepresent this ' liberty,

^a Confess. chap. I. pag. 1.

^b Sunt quam plurimi, qui hanc libertatem fidei audientes, mox eam in occasionem carnis vertant, omnia sibi statim licere arbitantes, nec aliâ re ullâ liberi et Christiani videri volentes, quam contemptu et reprehensione ceremoniarum, traditionum, legum humanarum. And just above — Christianus enim liber sic dicet; Ego jejunabo, orabo, hoc et hoc faciam, quod per homines mandatum est; non quod illi mihi sit opus ad justitiam aut salutem, sed quod in hoc morem geram papæ, episcopo, communitati illi, et illi magistratui, aut proximo meo ad exemplum faciam. — Seckend. lib. i. sect. 27. §. LXIIX. pag. 101.

' liberty, as if all obedience to men were taken
 ' away by it : ' but he subjects us both to their
 political and spiritual government. ' The first,'
 he says, ' is the appointment of God : the latter
 ' also must be obeyed in its external discipline
 ' and ceremonies, founded on that general scrip-
 ' ture rule, *Let all things be done decently and in*
 ' *order :* ' which discipline is alterable according
 ' to the circumstances of times and places. Now
 ' it is the duty of Christian people, says he, to
 ' keep human constitutions framed according to
 ' this rule, with a free conscience indeed, and
 ' without superstition : yet with a pious readiness
 ' to obey. Not to despise them, not to pass them
 ' over with a careless negligence : much less
 ' ought they by pride and obstinacy openly to
 ' break them.' Our own church, it is well
 known, when she asserted her liberty against
 the usurpations and tyranny of Rome, submit-
 ted herself, in externals, to the supremacy of
 her chief magistrate, whom the nation, by com-
 mon consent in parliament, ' restored to all such
 B 2 ' jurisdictions,

' 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

' Statim enim atque de humanarum constitutionum abro-
 gatione verbum factum est, ingentes turbæ partim à sedi-
 tiosis, partim à calumniatoribus, commoventur : quasi uni-
 versa simul tollatur ac subvertatur hominum obedientia. Lib.
 iii. cap. xix. §. 14. Primum advertamus duplex esse in ho-
 mine regimen : alterum spirituale, . . . alterum politicum.
 §. 15. Magistratum functionem non modo sibi probari ac-
 ceptamque esse testatus est Dominus : sed honorificentissimis
 insuper elogiis ejus dignitatem prosequutus mirifice nobis
 commendavit. Lib. iv. cap. xx. §. 4. Has demum humanas
 constitutiones me probare quæ et Dei autoritate fundatæ,
 et ex scriptura desumptæ, adedque prorsus divinæ sunt . . .
 quia autem in externâ disciplinâ et caeremoniis non voluit
 (Dominus) sigillatim præscribere quid sequi debeamus,
 (quod istud pendere à temporum conditione prævideret, ne-
 que judicaret unam sæculis omnibus formam convenire) con-
 fugere

jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and pre-eminences, spiritual or ecclesiastical, as by any ecclesiastical power or authority formerly had been, or might be lawfully exercised for visitation of the ecclesiastical state and persons, and for reformation, order, and correction of the same and all manner of errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities. They also gave her power over ceremonies in the worship of God, by advice of her commissioners or metropolitan. This proves the consent of the chief protestant churches, that the gospel liberty did not set us loose from all human authority in matters of religion.

Another protestant principle you represent to be, *a being restored to the privilege of working out their own salvation, by their own understanding and endeavours. And for this work of salvation sufficient means are afforded in the holy scriptures, without having recourse to the doctrines and commandments of men.* That no man hath authority to make new articles of faith unknown to scripture, and to bind them upon us as necessary terms of salvation, is true; and was the very point on which the protestants broke with the church of Rome. Nor had you the least need to specify, as a principle of the first protestants, what is a principle of all protestants now, and very consistent with their use of articles.

fugere. hic oportet ad generales quas dedit regulas, ut ad eas exigantur quicunque ad ordinem et decorum prout necessitas ecclesie postulabit. Lib. iv. cap. x. §. 30. Jam vero Christiani populi officium est, quod secundum hunc canonem fuerint instituti, liberam quidem conscientiam, nullaque superflitione, pia tamen et facili ad obsequendum propensione servare, non contemptum habere, non supinam negligentiam preterire: tantum abest ut per fastum et contumaciam violare aperte debeat. §. 31. imo Blis. Confessio p. 1.

articles and confessions. This therefore gives some ground for suspicion, that you would represent the reformers as renouncing all regard and deference to the doctrine and judgment of the Christian church and its ministers: The contrary of which is true. Luther says, that 'ordinarily certain persons should be set apart to teach, and to administer the sacraments; the unlearned are to be instructed by catechisms and abridgments of scripture doctrine; the learned should submit their interpretations of scripture to be examined whether they agree with both Testaments, the ancient creeds, and certain evidences of what was held by the apostles.' And Calvin, on Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13. observes, 'that God, who could perfect his children at once, hath rather willed that they should grow and increase by the bringing up of the church; and hath committed the preaching of his heavenly doctrine to pastors in it; and obliges the people to submit themselves with a meek and teachable disposition, to be guided by teachers ordained for this purpose. . . . And as of old he not only gave the law, but added interpreters of it, at whose lips the people were to seek the true meaning of it: so

B 3

now

* Ad docendum verbum Dei et ad administranda sacramenta certos viros constitui debere. Vide Seckend. lib. i. sect. 45. §. ciii. p. 170. — Neminem quidem ad fidem cogi debere, attamen plebem rudem notitiâ necessariâ religionis imbuendam esse. In præfatione (ad catechismum) plebis ignorantiam deplorat, et episcopos acriter increpat, quod institutionem catechetica[m] neglexerint. Lib. ii. sect. 17. §. li. p. 145. A. D. 1529. — Videndum est igitur, utra interpretatio, nostra an contraria, congruat cum fontibus, hoc est, cum scriptis prophetiis et apostolicis, symbolis, et certis testimoniis apostolicæ sententiæ. Lib. iii. sect. 33. §. 130. p. 609. A. D. 1546.

' now he not only wills us to *give attendance to*
 ' *reading*, but hath set over us masters, by whose
 ' labors we may be assisted. . . . God's grace
 ' indeed is not tied to outward means; but we
 ' are tied to expect it by the ordinary mean of
 ' preaching; which while some fanatical men re-
 ' fuse, they intangle themselves in many hurtful
 ' snares. Pride, disdain, envy, drive some to
 ' persuade themselves, that they can sufficiently
 ' profit by private reading and meditation, and
 ' therefore despise the publick assemblies, and
 ' judge the office of preaching superfluous. Such
 ' men, breaking the bond of union, as much as
 ' in them lies, fall under the punishment of
 ' schism, by seducing themselves into dangerous
 ' errors.'^a The sense of our own church appears,
 not only in her articles, but in that previous a-
 bridgment of doctrines which she published in the
 infancy

^a Scribit Paulus Christum, ut impleret omnia, dedisse alios
 quidem apostolos, &c. Videmus ut Deus qui posset mo-
 mento suos perficere, nolit tamen eos adolescere in virilem
 ætatem nisi educatione ecclesiæ. Videmus modum exprimi:
 quia pastoribus injuncta est cœlestis doctrinæ prædicatio.
 Videmus omnes ad unum cogi in eundem ordinem, ut man-
 sueto et docili spiritu regendos se doctoribus in hunc usum
 creatis permittant . . . Sicut olim non contentus fuit solâ lege
 sed sacerdotes addidit interpretes, ex quorum labiis populus
 inquireret verum illius sensum: ita hodiè, non tantum vult
 nos esse lectioni attentos, sed magistros etiam præficit, quo-
 rum operâ adjuvemur . . . Etsi externis mediis alligata non
 est Dei virtus, nos tamen ordinario docendi modo alligavit:
 quem dum recusant tenere fanatici homines, multis se exi-
 tialibus laqueis involvunt. Multos impellit vel superbia,
 vel fastidium, vel æmulatio, ut sibi persuadeant privatim
 legendo et meditando se posse satis proficere, atque ita con-
 temnunt publicos cœtus, et prædicationem supervacuam
 ducant. Quoniam autem sacrum unitatis vinculum quan-
 tum in se est solvunt vel abrumpunt, nemo justam impij
 hujus divortij pœnam effugit, quin se pestiferis erroribus ac
 æterrimis delirijs fascinet. Calvini Institut. lib. iv. cap. i.
 §. 5.

infancy of her reformation, called the *pia et catholica hominis Christiani institutio*. These (speaking of bishops, priests, and other ministers of the church) are our spiritual fathers, by whose labors the people are begotten unto God by the gospel. These take on them the care of souls, and are appointed by God to administer the holy sacraments, and to feed the people by the doctrine of the word.¹ Thus we see, according to these three principal roots of protestantism, the holy scriptures do not afford sufficient means for the work of salvation, without having recourse to the doctrines and commandments of men, in a proper sense, though not in that which our Saviour condemns. They are indeed originally the doctrines and commandments of Christ, and are to be received as such; but they are to be made known, explained, and enforced by the ministry of men, whom Christ appointed, in his apostles, to teach their disciples *all things whatsoever he hath commanded*;* and they, in consequence of his appointment, provided for a succession of teachers to the world's end. And when all things that Christ commanded were committed to writing, interpreters would be necessary to those who were strangers to the language in which they were first written; and when translated, expositors would be necessary to such as are not sufficiently acquainted with figures

B 4

in

¹ Nam hi sunt [de episcopis, presbyteris, et ministris ecclesiae loquitur] spirituales patres, quorum opera per evangelium populus Deo generatur. Et hi curam animarum susceperunt, atque à Deo constituti sunt, ut divina sacramenta exhibeant, populumque verbi doctrinâ pascant. — *Pia et catholica Christiani hominis institutio, ad quintum præceptum decalogi.*

* Matth. xxviii. 20.

in writing, the customs and histories referred to and the agreement or analogy of scripture.

In these scriptures, as you proceed, all things needful for spiritual living and man's soul's health are mentioned and shewed : consequently, faith and conscience, having no dependence upon man's laws, are not to be compelled by man's authority ; and none other hath the church of Rome to shew for the spiritual dominion she claimeth.¹ But I fear your doctrine, that every man has a right to interpret what is needful for man's soul's health, without any dependence on other mens assistance for the direction of his faith and conscience, will justify the church of Rome in her claim of spiritual dominion, which she pretends to derive from scripture. The protestants, who denied this dominion, denied her interpretation of scripture to be the true one, on which she built it. They not only foresaw, but experienced, that ignorance, or obstinacy, or wrong affections, influenced men to interpret the divine word variously and falsely ; sometimes in points wherein man's soul's health was at stake, as well as in others, which, however useful, yet were not so needful. In remedy of this, they did not lay it down as a principle, that human authority was not to be admitted as a guide to understand the scriptures, and so remotely to influence faith and conscience ; but Luther, as Seckendorf relates, taught, that ' doctrines necessary to salvation should be certain and determinate out of the scriptures ; so that every heretical sense erroneously introduced may be confuted by scripture itself, as oft as men of learning and piety, laying aside prejudice, and imploring the divine assistance, compare and weigh

¹ Confess. p. 1, 2.

‘ weigh the passages.’^m They likewise, in their protestation in the colloquy at Ratisbone, defer to the three creeds, of the apostles, Nice, and Athanasius, as epitomes or summaries of the gospels; to the four first general councils, and others, so far as their decrees are confirmed by scripture; and to the ancient ecclesiastical writers, so far as they themselves desire to be received, which is no further than they produce the testimony of scripture.ⁿ Calvin, speaking of the spiritual power which is proper to the church, says, ‘ it consists either in doctrine, or in jurisdiction, or in making of laws. Doctrine hath two parts, the authority to teach articles of doctrine, and the expounding of them. . . . If there happen debate about any doctrine, we do willingly grant, there is no better, no surer remedy, than if a synod of true bishops assemble together, where the doctrine in controversy may be discussed: for such a determination, whereunto the pastors of the church shall agree in common together, calling upon the spirit of Christ, shall have

^m Verissimum enim est quod vir summus hic inculcat, dogmata, quæ ad salutem necessaria sunt, ex scripturis sacris certa esse debere, ita quidem, ut hereticus sensus, scripturæ per errorem illatus, ex ipsa scriptura confutari possit et debeat, quotiescunque pii doctores, positis prejudiciis, et invocato Dei auxilio, dicta conferunt et examinant. Lib. iii. sect. 7. §. xx. p. 54.

ⁿ Secundo, amplectimur quoque, tanquam scripturæ prophetiæ ac apostolicæ epitomen seu summam, symbola tria, ut apostolorum, Nicenum, et Athanasianum. Tertio, amplectimur item quatuor magna concilia, Nicenum, Constantinopolitanum, Ephesinum, et Chalcedonense, et alia, quatenus quidem cum sacrâ scripturâ conveniunt, et quorum dogmata et decreta scripturis sacris confirmata sunt. Quarto, agnoscimus scriptores veteres ecclesiasticos, sed quatenus ipsi agnosci et legi volunt, et sententia eorum testimonium habet scripturæ. Seekend. lib. iii. sect. 35. §. cxxxii. p. 631.

" have much greater force, than if every one se-
 " verally should conceive it at home, or so teach
 " it to the people. Again, when bishops are ga-
 " thered together, they do the more commodiously
 " take advice in common, what, and in what
 " form, they ought to teach, lest diversity should
 " breed offence. . . . If any man trouble the
 " church with an unwonted doctrine, and the mat-
 " ter procedes so far that there be peril of greater
 " dissension, the church should first meet toge-
 " ther, and examine the question propounded :
 " at last, after just discussing had, bring forth a
 " determination taken out of the scriptures, such
 " as may both take away doubting from the peo-
 " ple, and stop the mouths of the wicked. So
 " when Arius was risen, the Nicene synod was ga-
 " thered together, which, by its authority, both
 " broke the wicked endeavours of that ungodly
 " man, and restored peace to the church, which
 " he had vexed, and defended the eternal God-
 " head of Christ against his blasphemous doctrine.
 " . . . The old synods of Nice, Constanti-
 " nople, the first of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and
 " such others which were holden for confuting of
 " errors, we willingly embrace and reverence, so
 " much as belongeth to the doctrines of faith.

Which

. ° De spiritali tantum potestate loquor, quæ propria est
 ecclesiæ. Ea autem consistit vel in doctrinâ, vel in juris-
 dictione, vel in legibus ferendis. Locus de doctrinâ duas
 habet partes, auctoritatem dogmatum tradendorum, et eo-
 rum explicationem. Calvin. instit. lib. iv. cap. viii. §. 1.
 . . . Nos certè libenter concedimus, si quo de dogmate in-
 cidat disceptatio, nullum esse nec melius nec certius reme-
 dium, quam si verorum episcoporum synodus conveniat,
 ubi contraversum dogma excutitur. Multo enim plus pon-
 deris habebit ejusmodi definitio in quam communiter eccle-
 siarum pastores, invocato Christi spiritu, consenserint, quàm
 si quisque seorsum domi conceptam populo traderet, vel
 pauci

Which appears to have been the sense of our own church too, not only in her articles, but also much earlier, in the preface to *The Institution of a Christian Man*.

‘ What a face would our church
 ‘ hereafter wear, says the writer of it, were men to
 ‘ go on rashly to determine out of their own fancies
 ‘ the most important doctrines and articles of
 ‘ faith, and worry one another with their contro-
 ‘ versies? To drive which plague a-
 ‘ way from this kingdom, our renowned king
 ‘ (Hen. VIII.) thought proper to consult with
 ‘ some men of learning and integrity, whom he
 ‘ called together for that purpose, about framing
 ‘ a compendium of Christian institution, which
 ‘ should contain the doctrine necessary to instruct
 ‘ the people in true piety and the law of God,
 ‘ and so clearly explaine certain articles, at this
 ‘ time in controversy, that all men may see plainly
 ‘ what points are true and agreeable to the ge-
 ‘ neral faith of the church.’^p Still neither Lu-
 ther,

pauci homines privatim eam conficerent. Deinde ubi col-
 lecti in unum sunt episcopi, commodius in commune deli-
 berant quid sibi et quâ formâ docendum sit, ne diversitas
 offendiculum pariat atque ita nos ipse pietatis sensus
 instituit, ut si quis turbet ecclesiam dogmate inusitato, atque
 eò res perveniat ut sit periculum à graviore dissidio, conve-
 niant primùm ecclesiæ: quæstionem propositam examinent:
 demum, justâ discussione habitâ, definitionem ex scripturâ
 sumptam proferant, quæ et dubitationem in plebe tollat, et
 os obstruat improbis et cupidis hominibus, ne pergere am-
 plius audeant. Sic exorto Arrio coacta est Nicena synodus,
 quæ suâ autoritate et sceleratos impii hominis conatus fre-
 git, et pacem restituit ecclesiis quas vexaverat, et æternam
 Christi divinitatem contra sacrilegum ejus dogma asseruit.
 Calvin. inst. cap. ix. §. 13.

^p Qualis enim futura esset ecclesiæ facies, si pergerent
 homines de gravissimis fidei dogmatibus atque articulis ex
 suo cerebro temerè pronunciare, et mutuis se concertationi-
 bus agitare ac laceßere? — quam pestem ab hâc repub-
 licâ

ther, nor Calvin, nor our own reformers, meant, nor do we mean, that men should believe their teachers, whether separate or assembled, since both are fallible, contrary to what appears to them, on the best use of their own understanding, with all helps, to be the dictate of reason or scripture: but only that they should impartially and carefully attend to the informations, and allow a just weight to the learning and judgment, of those whom Providence hath set over them.

Lastly, you say, *the church of Christ is congregated by the word of God, and not by man's law; nor are the king's laws any farther to be obeyed than they agree with the law of God.*^a Their principles were, that princes should have a particular care of the publick worship of God; that their commands in general are to be obeyed; but if their commands are contrary to the commands of God, we must obey God rather than man: yet, as private Christians, we must submit to the unjust severities or punishments they inflict.^r The doctrine

lica et regno suo clarissimus rex noster depellere atque arcere cogitans, accitis nuper aliquot eruditis viris, et de quorum integritate ipsius majestas optimam opinionem conceperat, cum his consilium conferre dignatus est, de ejusmodi Christianae institutionis formâ compendio perstringendâ, quæ necessariam ad erudiendum vulgus in verâ pietate et Dei legē doctrinam contineret, et articulos quosdam, de quibus hoc sæculo contentiones existere cœperunt, ita dilucidè explicaret, ut quid in ejusmodi controversiis verum sincerumque esset, quid catholicae fidei consentaneum ac pro certo tenendum, universi perspicerent ac clarè intelligerent. — Pia et catholica Christiani hominis institutio. Præfat. p. 3.

^a Confess. p. 2.

^r Omnes etiam Christiani gladio seculari ex charitatis et spiritus directione lubentissime obsequuntur. . . . Si tibi princeps injungat, ut papæ obedias, atque hoc vel illud credas, libros tradas, &c. ita respondeas: Parebo ratione corporis et bonorum; impera pro jure quod habes in terris, obsequar: sed

trine of the church of England is seen in her 37th article.

Such were the principles of the first protestant churches, by their own express testimony; with which, confessions of faith, and articles of religion, are not only very consistent, but those principles directly led to the establishment of them. Diversity of opinions, they experienced, did then divide the church; and they never dreamed of remedying this evil by leaving private Christians without publick guidance, to interpret scripture

sed non parebo si credere aut libros tradere jubes, sic enim tyrannice imperas quæ jure imperare non potes. Si verò tibi sit respondentem bona tua auferat, aut poenâ te afficiat ob inobedientiam, beatus es: gratias age Deo, quod dignum te feceris ad patiendum pro verbo ejus: perfer insani illius servitium, habebis iudicium suum. Luther. de seculari potestate: vide Seckend. lib. I. sect. 2. §. cxxvii. p. 211, 212. Et Calvinus in institut. lib. IV. cap. xx. de politica administratione agit.—Cujus usus . . . non huc spectat duntaxat, ut spirent homines, edant, bibant, foveantur. . . sed ne idololatria, ac in Dei nomen sacrilegia, ne adversus ejus veritatem blasphemia, aliaque religionis offensiones publice emergant ac in populum spargantur . . . dedique ut inter Christianos publica religionis facies exsistat. . . §. 3. Nobis autem interim summopere cavendum, ne illam plenam venerandæ majestatis magistratum auctoritatem, quam Deus gravissimis edictis sanxit, etiam si etiam apud indignissimos relideat, atqui eam suâ nequitia, quantum in se est, possunt, spernamus aut violemus. Neque enim, si ultio Domini est effrenata dominationis correctio, ideo protinus demandatam nobis arbitremur: quibus nullum aliud quam parendi et patiendi datum est mandatum. De privatis hominibus semper loquor. §. 31. — Adversus ipsum (Deum) si quid imperent, nullo sit nec loco nec numero: neque hic totam illam quæ magistratus pollent dignitatem quicquam moremur. . . Scio quantum et quam præsens huic constantis periculum immineat . . . sed . . . obediendum Deo potius quam hominibus, hæc nos cogitatione consolemur, illam tum nos præstare quam Dominus exigit obedientiam, dum quidvis perpetimur potius quam à pietate desectamus. §. 32.

as they pleased, and publish their singularities to the world. Their rule was to call the learned and most exercised in the scriptures together, to confer on the disputed points. Where the blindness of individuals might receive assistance from others, and their respective peculiarities and prejudices be rubbed off by the amicable collision of debate, and the point be determined by the authority of scripture only : but if they differed about the sense of that, the interpretation of the church, preserved in her creeds universally embraced ; the ancient general councils, so far as they were received ; and the consent of the primitive doctors in agreement with them, were to decide. By these means they not only hoped to prevent *frequent occasions of offence among themselves, not without some advantage to the common adversary* ; but also to direct the serious enquirer, in the diversity of opinions which then divided Christendom, in what communion it would be safest for him to rest his faith and conscience.

You seem to wish that other means had been tried, which *might have kept the terms of communion sufficiently open for pious and reasonable Christians of very different opinions to have complied with them, without abridging their Christian liberty, or doing violence to their consciences.** As we do not know who those *pious and reasonable Christians* were who refused to comply with the terms of protestant communion : whether they were not such, who, had they been asked their own opinion of themselves, would have told us they were *pious Christians*, although they refused to worship their God and Saviour ; and *reasonable*, because they refused to give credit even to divine revelation, if it did not square with their prejudices ; we cannot possibly say whether

* Confess. p. 2.

ther they were such, as the terms of communion ought to have been opened wider to receive, or not : And as you are not obliging enough to acquaint us what those means were which you seem to wish had rather been tried ; neither *can determine now whether they would have prevented very ill consequences* ; nor give us any encouragement, were they communicated, to try them, as you tell us *the distemper is too far gone to be cured* ; we may be the less concerned at your unkindness in suppressing them. Yet, after all, they did admit to their communion (*pious and reasonable Christians* I charitably hope they were, yet certainly) Christians of very different opinions. They excluded those who imposed articles of faith as necessary to salvation, which were not contained in scripture : this kept out papists, who maintained that the pope's decrees and laws were of equal authority with scripture ; and the irregular enthusiasts, who pretended to oblige conscience by secret divine revelations. They also, after judging for themselves, as well as they could, what articles of faith appeared in scripture necessary to salvation, excluded, (and how could they admit ?) those who refused submission to them : but as they acknowledged, after all their care in discussing, that they might err in their interpretation of scripture, it was certainly possible that they might shut some pious and reasonable Christians out of their society : and this, when it did happen, was a great misfortune, which nothing short of infallibility could prevent ; yet *that* they could not hope to find even in the general councils of learned and good men, much less in the decrees of popes, or the singular opinions of private men. In points of faith not necessary to salvation, though confirmed by a probable interpretation of

of scripture, difference of opinion, they thought, was to be born, with mutual charity. Points indifferent, respecting externals, not specially determined in scripture, yet enjoined by the governors of the church, were to be complied with, on the authority of the general scripture rule, *All things be done decently and in order.*

You charge them with *contracting their original plan, in agreement with maxims*, which you say they unhappily adopted as *self-evident*. Their original plan, to be judged of from their own declarations, and not from an imaginary and fanciful representation of it, needed no contracting to agree with the maxims to which you object, and which are now to be considered; namely:

1. *That there could be no edification in religious society without uniformity of opinion.* They might justly believe that no progress could be made in any science, where no principles were admitted, and no conclusions enforced, where no premisses were agreed in. Holding different opinions endangers edification, in some degree: *scabbing* different opinions, in a greater: yet both may leave room for some, and even for much edification, though not for so much; provided the opinions be not destructive of Christian faith: nor did the first reformers think otherwise. All who hold the Christian faith, in points essential, are so far qualified for Christian communion. Individuals must judge for themselves, what they shall hold

Seckend. lib. iii. sect. 7. §. 20. In fidei articulis capitalibus et necessariis nullum esse cedendi medium, sed rigidam veritatem ex sacris literis eruendam esse. . . . In ceteris omnibus temperamento et conventionibus locum esse, immoderatae legi exigi, ut pacis causa nihil non cedatur, quod, salva divina veritate, cedi possit: denique et si non possit conveniri, charitatem tamen merito colendam esse.

Confess. p. 3.

Ibid.

as such Christian faith; and churches must judge for themselves, whom they shall consider as holding it.

2. *That the true sense of scripture could be but ONE.* And I cannot but be of the same opinion; otherwise you make the oracles of truth as uncertain and fallacious as the oracles of impostors; which were so expressed as to be capable of different, and even contrary, senses: and if every sense, to which the scriptures may be tortured, were equally true and safe, *unlearned and unstable* men could not *wrest them to their own destruction*. Indeed the ONE sense of scripture may be general, and comprehend under it several particulars. If all those several particulars are necessary doctrines, *all* must be believed, by persons who are capable of receiving them. If one be an essential truth, and the other only useful, conscientious teachers will use all necessary means to ascertain that one essential truth; and use all prudent means, allowed by scripture, to recommend every truth contained in it to their disciples, with an earnestness proportioned to its importance; yet so as to allow those who hold the necessary doctrines, to build them on such texts as they judge most pertinent, explaining others in other senses; and even to dissent from doctrines in which consent is not visibly necessary.

3. *The ONE sense of scripture was determined to be . . . the sense of the orthodox fathers, for a certain number of centuries, From these they took their interpretations of scripture, and upon these they formed their rule of faith and doctrine.* This is a heinous charge against those generous assertors of Christian liberty, the first reformers, and common justice requires that it should be proved before it is

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believed.

* Ibid.

* Ibid.

believed. Whatever regard they might have for those venerable writers the ancient fathers, especially when they first came out of a church where their authority was excessive, yet the reformers knew how to restrain this regard for them within proper bounds: for Luther, in his commentaries upon Genesis, chap. xxi. observes, that the
 ‘ papists draw articles of faith from the sayings of
 ‘ the holy fathers, and will not suffer them to be
 ‘ disputed. The word of God alone demands as-
 ‘ sent, not canons or sayings of the fathers, any
 ‘ further than as they agree with scripture.’ Only scripture was the authority on which they rested: yet if, after proving the sense of a text by the common use of the language, and by parallel or similar places, appearances of ambiguity and doubts should remain in the minds of any persons, the like explications, given by former good and learned men, must be of some, and may often be justly of great, use to remove those doubts. And if, after producing good scripture evidence for doctrines, objections should be raised against it from other scriptures, or from the difficulty of comprehending the subject, it must certainly be a great confirmation of our faith in them to find, that the ancient creeds of the church, the decisions of her general councils, and the writings of her most respected fathers, agreed in the same belief. Therefore the early protestants, particularly of our own church, thought it the discreetest way of forming their judgements, and the most reputable way of defending them, to make use of these helps. Still, were it possible that a private

Qui (papistæ) ex singulis dictis et verbis sanctorum patrum faciunt articulos fidei, quibus non liceat refragari . . . Ideo uni et soli verbo Dei credendum est, non canonibus, non sanctorum patrum dictis, nisi quatenus cum verbo consentiant.

person could have an infallible certainty of the meaning of any text, or of the true state of any doctrine, which all the church had mistaken, he not only might, but ought to prefer it to all the creeds, councils, and fathers, that could be produced against him. But in proportion as he hath any cause to be diffident of himself and of his own opinion, the concurring persuasions of others may reasonably have authority with him; and it will always be one consideration present to the mind of an humble and prudent Christian, that, ordinarily speaking, it is much more likely that one or a few should err through ignorance or partiality, perhaps unperceived, than greater numbers, at least, equally qualified, (and especially than the body of the Christian church, through successive ages,) in points of importance. Regard to antiquity, and universality of sentiments, thus limited, will never lead persons either into popery, or any other dangerous mistake.

You complain, that by this means they *reduced their respective churches within the bounds of a theological system. The consequence of which was, that every opinion deviating from this system, whatever countenance and support it might have from a different sense of scripture, became a declared heresy.*

I know of no theological system, among the early protestants, drawn out from the writings of the fathers. Peter of Lombardy, indeed, composed one in the twelfth century; but I hope you do not mistake him for a protestant. The German protestants lived under several princes, who also were subject to the emperor: articles and confessions were therefore drawn up by them, to justify themselves from the charge of heresy and sedition, stating the points in which they differed

from the church of Rome in doctrine and ceremonies, and condemning the wild and seditious positions of enthusiasts; throwing their opponents into three classes: such as taught, for articles of faith necessary to salvation, doctrines not grounded in scripture, they called *diabolical*: such they esteemed papists and enthusiasts. Those who differed in their interpretation of scripture, and refused to acknowledge what the universal church had held as necessary doctrines, taught in scripture, by the testimony of her creeds, general councils, and consent of ancient doctors, they judged *heretical*: as such they condemned anabaptists. And those who differed in points of less moment they thought were to be born with. Daillé says, that ‘ he never heard of any re-
 ‘ former, or ever read in their writings, that they
 ‘ allowed the authority of the fathers was a suffi-
 ‘ cient ground of faith: but that some of them
 ‘ used their evidence against the papists, to prove
 ‘ that they had introduced novel opinions, and
 ‘ corrupted the faith in later times.’ And in
 their publick confessions we find them ‘ avouching
 ‘ before God and the whole church, in heaven
 ‘ and in earth, that we do with a true faith em-
 ‘ brace all the writings of the prophets and apos-
 ‘ tles.’ — ‘ That the apostle Peter hath said,
 ‘ that the holy scriptures are not of any private
 ‘ interpretation; therefore we do not allow all ex-
 ‘ positions: . . . but we acknowledge that inter-
 ‘ pretation of scripture for authentical and proper,
 ‘ which being taken from the scriptures them-
 ‘ selves . . . accordeth with the rule of faith and
 ‘ charity. . . . Wherefore we do not contemn
 ‘ the

• Vide Seckend, lib. iii. sect. 7. §. 20. p. 54.

• De usu patrum, cap. vi. p. 309, 310.

• Saxon confession.

the holy treatises of the fathers agreeing with the scriptures; from whom, notwithstanding, we do modestly dissent, . . . as they are sometimes found altogether contrary to the same. Neither do we think that we do them any wrong, . . . seeing that they will not have their writings matched with the canonical scriptures, . . . but bid us take those things that agree, and leave those that disagree: and according to this order we account of the decrees or canons of councils.* — Wherefore we do for this cause also allow those three creeds, namely, the apostles, the Nicene, and Athanasius's creed, because they be agreeable to the written word of God.† It could not give just offence to any one, if what was heresy by this rule was declared to be so. The reformers were to answer to Christ, if by any blameable neglect, or turn of mind, they so far mistook as to condemn a needful truth, or any error consistent with the rule of faith, for heresy. Some of these, who were really heretical, or (according to Luther's distinction) diabolical, were such as you describe; men whose pride, passion, and self-conceit knew no bounds, and whom the most reasonable terms of communion did not restrain, under pretence of asserting their liberty; and who were scandals to all religion, and nuisances to all civil society: yet probably most, if not all, (but certainly many of them) were willing to subscribe to scripture, as the word of God, and containing all things necessary to salvation. Were they not then, according to your way of thinking, fit to be admitted for teachers, without any further declaration? and can that way of thinking be right? You add,

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That

* Latter confession of Helvetia.

† French confession.

That they were the offspring of the reformation was not to be denied.^z Rather of absurd attempts to reform the reformation: not genuine productions of it, but unnatural grafts upon it, which could not thrive in it. Thus Storke and Muncer censured Luther for not having done *enough*. They were, in their times, the advocates for *absolute liberty, equal and impartial liberty*, preaching against magistrates, that all men should be upon a level, and all their goods common. Doctrines sure of gaining proselytes among the licentious rabble, who greedily embraced a re-reformation, which obliged them in conscience to plunder the rich: for they built all upon the bible, interpreted by their own spirit, which they called the spirit of Christ; for so they interpreted, *we must be all taught of God*. According to which spirit they prophesied to their seditious bands success in their war with the nobles and magistrates, because the scriptures had promised expressly, that *the righteous should wash their feet in the blood of the ungodly*.^h And although they were miserably convinced of the falseness of their interpretations of both those texts, by the execution of Muncer and 300 of his chief associates, and the slaughter of above 5000 of his deluded followers in battle, the busy interpreting spirit was not subdued. It flamed out again in the taylor of Leyden, John Becold, who went on in the same track, preaching up an equality, and no magistracy: till having made himself master of Munster, he was, as he affirmed, *taught of God*,ⁱ that the city should be governed by 12 men of his name, and he himself should be king of the universe. When his majesty appeared in publick, two young men carried

^z Confes. p. 4.

^h Ps. lviii. 9.

ⁱ John vi. 45.

a bible before him, as his guide : and to shew his strict adherence to *scripture precedents*, he celebrated the Lord's supper with 5000 communicants, with the primitive practice of a love-feast, consisting of three courses ; in the midst of which he went out, and himself beheaded a prisoner, and returned with those bloody hands, to finish the holy supper.^k

These circumstances laid the protestants under a necessity of publishing to the whole world explicit confessions of their faith and doctrine ; — and by this means they acquitted themselves, at least among all equitable judges, of the scandal of abetting the schismatical and seditious enthusiasts, who about that time infested different countries, under the pretence of promoting reformation.^l Then you allow, explicit confessions of faith and doctrine are sometimes necessary ; and particularly then necessary when schismatical and seditious enthusiasts pretend to promote reformation, under claim of interpreting scripture by their private spirit. And is not this concession an answer to your whole book, and a justification of calling for *formal attestations*, to acquit ourselves of the scandal of abetting such schismatical and seditious doctrines ?

You complain that *these confessions . . . very soon became of more importance than just to serve a present turn.*^m The turn that was then present is still present, and will be so, in different degrees, as long as the church shall continue militant ; and laying them aside would raise a reproach, too probable at first, and likely to grow continually juster, that the good old doctrines were changed, and a wide opening made for ever so many bad ones to come in their room.

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To

^k Sleiden et Hortensius.

^l Confess. p. 5.

^m Ibid.

To secure the reputation of their uniformity to all succeeding times, an unfeigned assent to the publick confession, confirmed either by subscription, or a solemn oath, became, in most of the protestant churches, an indispensable condition of qualifying their pastors for the ministry.* One occasion of confessions in particular churches grew out of the obedience that was due from them to their bishops and their princes. To justify their non-submission to their bishops, it was necessary to point out the particular sinful doctrines and practices to which they durst not submit; and at the same time to shew that they did not forsake the catholick church, but retained all the doctrines established by it, from scripture, in the creeds and general councils: and this they did when they separated from the popish bishops. And as some mad enthusiasts, under pretence of reformation, had behaved very disorderly against the peace of the state, on mistaken principles, it became necessary to justify themselves to the civil magistrates, by publicly disavowing such mistaken principles. On the first of these occasions most of their confessions, in the main, agree; and as the papists still endeavour to insil their errors into our people, it is necessary that our teachers should declare against them, for a security that they will not preach such doctrines. On the second, they varied according to the several opinions of seditious enthusiasts in their respective districts, who had disturbed the civil peace. These latter not only have varied in several churches, but also may vary in the same church, as new enthusiasts and disturbers of the peace arise. But it was never the intent of any to give a full detail of all that was to be believed or practiced by true Christians. They are principally meant

* Confess. p. 6.

meant as the abjuration of errors ; not at all as a perfect delineation of gospel perfection.

*But this expedient, intended to prevent division in particular societies, unhappily proved the means of embroiling different churches one with another.** If that happened to be the event, it was the effect of their unreformed passions, not of their reformed principles.† In the great dispute betwixt Luther and Zuinglius, about Christ's presence in the Lord's supper, both believed the necessary truth, that he, who partakes of the elements in faith, eats the body of Christ that was given for us, and drinks his blood shed for the remission of sins, and thereby hath communion with the body of Christ and with the blood of Christ : the difference was, whether Christ were there *substantially* coexisting with the elements, or only *effectually* : in short, whether he were there in a *possible* or *impossible* manner. Consubstantiation is not a heresy, but an absurdity ; and Luther, in refusing communion with the Zuinglians, departed from his own principle, which was, that difference of interpretation, in points not essential, (as the *modus* of the presence here, when the presence itself was agreed in) should be born with mutual charity. And in the conference at Marpurg, where they accorded in every point else, they also concurred in the following conclusion : ‘ That since they all agreed about the chief points of doctrine, they should for the future refrain from all contention, and pray to God that he would also enlighten them in this controversy, and put them in the way of concord.’‡ To which Luther and Zuinglius, with their

* Ibid.

† See before, p. 16, note †.

‡ Credimus et profiteamur omnes, de cœnâ Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quod ——— quod item sacramentum altaris sit

their associates, signed. And though the first of these had great fire, and the latter much rusticity in their natures, they shook hands and parted friendly. Their subsequent quarrels must be imputed to other causes than to their common principles; which while they led them to make publick profession of their faith, obliged them to bear their mutual differences with mutual charity.

At length the immortal Cbilingworth arose, who disclaimed the defence of the protestant religion, as it lay in systems and confessions, and appealed to the bible only. How can you suggest this? 'We have, saith he himself, *other direction*, the testimony of the primitive Christians.' He calls the scripture, and the consent of the antient doctors, 'the pillars of faith.' And in his book says, 'some protestants took their direction in this work of reformation *only from scripture*; others from the writings of fathers and the decrees of councils of the first five ages;' and that 'they did best that followed scripture, interpreted

fit sacramentum veri corporis et sanguinis Jesu Christi. Et quodd spiritualis manducatio carnis et sanguinis ejusdem unicuique Christiano imprimis necessaria sit. — Quanquam autem inter nos hætenus non planè potuit convenire, num verum corpus et verus sanguis Christi pani et vino corporaliter insit: nihilominus tamen debet utraque pars, altera erga alteram, declarare Christianam charitatem, quatenus id cujusque conscientia ferre potest. Et utraque pars à Deo Opt. Max. assiduis precibus contendere debet, ut is nobis per spiritum suum verum intellectum constabilire dignetur. Subscripserunt Lutherus, Jonas, Melancthon, Osiander, Agricola, Brentius: Ecolampadius, Zuinglius, Bucerus, Hedio.

Lavater. in historiâ de origine et progressu controversiæ sacramentariæ de cœnâ Domini, p. 15, 16.

Confess. p. 7. note.

Preface to an answer to N. N. §. 13, 16.

‘terpreted by catholick written tradition.’ And in his reasons against popery, sent to Mr. Lewgar, he professes ‘the foundation of his faith is *‘scripture and universal tradition.’* Nor has he any objection to their delivering their sense of scripture in systems and confessions; for he says, ‘that the apostle’s creed (as it is explained in the latter creeds of the catholick church) contains all those points of belief which were by God’s command of necessity to be preached to all, and believed by all.’”

In the same note you say, *M. des Maizeaux* (*Chillingworth’s biographer*) *thought it necessary to exculpate Chillingworth from this popish charge of novelty, and, as it seems to me, has succeeded very ill.* Had Chillingworth meant by *the bible only* to have excluded all assistance from the ancient creeds, general councils, and fathers, for understanding their true sense and meaning, we see it had not been a *novelty*, from a passage above-quoted; in which he witnesses, that ‘some protestants took their direction in this work of reformation *only from scripture.*’ but this was not his meaning, because, in the same passage, ‘they did best, in his opinion, that followed scripture interpreted by catholick written tradition.’ And that this was no *new-opinion* *des Maizeaux* has sufficiently shewn, from our VIth article and the harmony of confessions. And if Chillingworth’s method of defending protestantism had been such an innovation, as you pretend, it would not have had, as it hath, the approbation, in due form, of the vice-chancellor and the two professors of divinity of the university of Oxford, and of archbishop Sheldon’s chaplain,

* Ch. v. §. 82.

* Ch. iv. §. 1, 23.

lain, Dr. Stradling, at its third impression in 1663.

But the question, you say, was not, what all protestants had declared; but, whether any protestant church had acted conformably to that declaration, and ventured to defend the protestant religion on scripture principles, even at the expence (if so it should fall out) of its own established confession? Yes, sir, all protestant churches, who had declared, that scripture thus rightly interpreted was the ground of their religion, *acted* conformably to that declaration, when they drew up their confessions according to these principles. But you require them to *act* in conformity to their *declaration*, by contradicting their confession, which they publicly acknowledge was drawn up agreeably to their declaration. This is a new method of conformity, which I suppose those gentlemen best understand, who, having *willingly and ex animo* declared that all and every the articles contained in the confession of their own church are *agreeable* to the word of God, think they *act* most in conformity to that declaration by writing against those very articles, as *contrary* to the word of God. However, sir, if you make it a question, whether *any* protestant church, having declared the bible only to be its rule of faith, and made a confession of faith, as they imagined, agreeably thereto; yet, afterwards, finding reason to doubt whether they had not determined more than the true sense of scripture would warrant, ever ventured to defend the protestant religion on scripture principles, at the expence of its *once* established confession, by being more reserved in a subsequent confession: you have an instance of this courage in the church of England, in leaving K. Edward's III^d. article more general.

The

The most considerable of the points in dispute among them [the papists] had never been decided e cathedrâ, and so were left open to amicable debate, without breach of unity; whereas the doctrines controverted among protestants were solemnly established in their several confessions. — The reasons of the protestant confessions have been mentioned before, page 24; and it is surprising that different churches, reforming in several parts of Europe at the same time, should so nearly agree in the points which occasioned them to separate from Rome: in so many particulars was that church corrupted, that different churches might have protested for different reasons, and all sufficient to justify their separation. In their decisions against irregular enthusiasts their vindications of themselves must be as various as the seditions and false doctrines of those enthusiasts in the respective districts should call for; and the outward plan in worship and ceremonies would differ according to their respective judgements of expediency, and as the circumstances of time and place might persuade. In all these points, not affecting fundamentals, they allowed variety with the unity of charity; and if individuals quarrelled, the contention was contrary to protestant principles. If some, in opposing the popish doctrine of merit in good works, were carried so far as to approach imperceptibly towards fatalism, others, in urging the necessity of personal obedience, verged upon Pelagianism, such differences, according to their own principles, should have been born with: if they were the occasion of contention, the complexions of men were principally in fault. The Dominicans and Franciscans disputed as much among the papists on these points; and you yourself think *That controversy must have arisen, though*

*though Christians had been candid, capable, and upright throughout.**

But you say, *the confessions were ratified by oaths, subscriptions, &c. and the belief of them thereby made an indispensable condition of communion.*† How necessary soever it might be thought at first, when almost every state was divided, and the members of it contending with one another, to throw papists, protestants, and irregulars into classes, by subscribing confessions of their faith, as the two former did, (and the latter were known by having none to subscribe,) yet neither the necessity nor the practice continued long. When the religion of any protestant church was established in a state, and the governours were at leisure to attend the instruction of the people, they thought it sufficient to oblige the clergy only, who were supported by the state, to subscribe their confession; as a guide to them in grounding the people committed to their care in the necessary doctrines of faith, guarding them against the errors of popery and enthusiasm, and teaching them whatever truths of piety and morals publick or private utility required: and, in grateful return to the magistrate for their appointments from the publick, to caution the people from encouraging the usurpations of Rome and the seditions of fanatics: so that much more may be required, both justly and wisely, of ministers, than of mere communicants. A doctrine may be consistent with salvation, and yet extremely improper to be taught. An Antinomian, or an asserter of community of possessions, or a denier of the lawfulness of oaths, or of defensive war, may be a good man, but he must be a dangerous preacher: and other like instances might be given.

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* Confess. p. 254, note.

† Confess. p. 8.

The harmony of confessions published by the Belgic and Gallican churches in 1581, as an ample testimony of the unanimity of protestants in their principal doctrines, . . . was even affronted by the church of England; for being translated into English in 1586, archbishop Whitgift . . . would not allow it to be printed in London, and employed his authority to have it suppressed in other places. . . . It was, however, printed at Cambridge that year. . . . The Belgic and Gallican churches having expressed notions of church-government, ceremonies, &c. in some short observations at the end of the book, not very favorable to Whitgift's principles, his Grace's distaste for the work is not wholly unaccountable. The Harmony was published in 1581; the English confession had been published by authority in Latin ever since the year 1563: yet, as you acknowledge, in the Harmony her confession consists of extracts from bishop Jewel's Apology, and is not taken from her publick and authentick records. Of whatever authority that Apology might be, in giving a view of the publick confessions of several churches, it was not equal dealing to give the English from the works of a single doctor, and all the rest in the words of their publick records. This might be a reason why the archbishop endeavoured to suppress the work. Your reason suggested, viz. that it was, because they had expressed notions of church government, ceremonies, &c. in some short observations at the end of the book, unfavorable to Whitgift's principles, appears to be groundless; for as to the authority of the church to interpret scripture, they plainly allow that, 'in the judging of controversies, not any judges whatsoever do take unto themselves the name of the church; . . . but judges lawfully*

* Confess. p. 9. and note.

‘*fully chosen* :’ and with respect of decreeing ceremonies, they allow of ‘*such laws as pertain to order and decency, . . . by the judgement of a lawful assembly.*’^a

This Harmony was intended as a full and satisfactory confutation of the popish calumnies on this head, [of unanimity.] If the Harmony was not a full confutation of the popish calumnies, it was one to a very great degree. And was it not in all respects right to vindicate themselves as far as they could?

You think the manner in which this work was executed would obstruct the good effects expected from it, because, 1. *It made no mention of those whose confessions dissented.*^c If you mean the confessions of particular men, that was out of the scope of the book, which professes to be an Harmony of the confessions of the faith of the Christian and reformed churches, which purely profess the holy doctrine of the gospel, in all the chief kingdoms, nations, and provinces of Europe. And with respect to churches, what need was there, in a work designed to shew how far the principal protestant churches agreed, to mention those who differed from them? The editors were not disposed, whatever you may be, sir, to do the work of the papists for them.

2. *All the world knew very well that not one of these eleven churches would allow any man to minister in it, and hardly, perhaps, to communicate with it, who should refuse to subscribe the confession of that church, even though he should offer to subscribe or swear to every other system in the collection.*^d You give no proof that this case ever happened : and I doubt whether subscribing was ever made a condition

^a Observ. on sect. 10. and sect. 17.

^b Confess. p. 9. ^c Confess. p. 10. ^d Confess. p. 11.

dition of communicating : certainly not with us.

3. *The short observations at the end of the Harmony . . . plainly shew, that some of these churches were at too great a distance from each other, to be reconciled by any such equivocal expedients.* Those at greatest distance were the Lutherans and Calvinists : ‘ but they,’ says the editor in his preface, ‘ if so be that men keep within the bounds of their confessions, and all cavilling and sophistry be laid aside, and as well faithful as favorable exposition be admitted, shall be thought very nearly to agree in all things. . . . Of the thing itself there is no strife; we differ in certain adjuncts and circumstances of the thing.’ Which certainly may be done consistently with Christian unity.

The Corpus Confessionum was printed at Geneva, 1612; . . . in which were exhibited the confessions of sixteen different churches whole and entire, as they were published and acknowledged by the churches to which they respectively belonged. . . . This Heylin denied to be true; alledging, on the part of the church of England, that the first clause of her 20th article, concerning church authority, was in this collection feloniously secreted. You refer us to *An Historical and Critical Essay on the 39 Articles*, to see the editors of the *Corpus Confessionum* well vindicated. The author of this essay is said to be Anthony Collins, who justifies the editors of the *Corpus Confessionum* in this manner : ‘ Let the apologists for the authority of the clause produce, if they can, a Latin printed copy of the articles, with the clause in them, printed before 1612. If that cannot be done, how is the editor of the Harmony to be upbraided, who printed the

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‘ Latin

‡ Confess. p. 12.

‡ Confess. p. 12. and note.

‘ Latin articles, according to *all* copies of them, and, if he had printed them otherwise, had had *no* copy to justify him?’ My inconsiderable study can produce such a Latin printed copy of the articles, printed before 1612, Wolf’s edition of 1563. Collins says, ‘ the editor published, *as he ought*, the articles of 1571.’ — That is another point, which I shall not stay now to examine; but it is certain the editor might have had another copy, with the clause, though perhaps he did not know it.

On the article of justification and faith the editors observe, that all the confessions of the [protestant] churches teach this primary article. . . . with a most holy consent. Does not this note, with which this article alone is honored, seem to imply a consciousness in the editors, that this was the single article in which all these confessions did agree? How can you ask this question, when you know, as every one, who hath read the book, must, that it implies a gross falsehood? Agreement of all in one primary article might well be remarked, as in it they all disagreed with the church of Rome: and yet they might all agree in many others, which they held in common with the church of Rome, or which were not of equal moment. Their agreement concerning justification and faith might be as far as their confessions reached, and yet differ concerning many points to which their confessions did not reach, though some warm divines might imagine they did. You are yourself pleased to make allowances for this, (at page 8.) in favor of the church of Rome: why may not equal allowance be made in the case of protestant churches?

There

Introd. to the Essay, p. 43.

^a Confess. p. 14.

There is a dead silence in many (sometimes in the majority) of these confessions, concerning some of the fundamental articles of the Christian religion. Thus only six of them are referred to as speaking of the providence of God, in which number (I am loath to observe it) the English confession is not reckoned for one; though both Jewel's apology and the 39 articles are inserted in this collection, [the *Corpus Confessionum*.]

These confessions, as has been already observed, were not intended as summaries of all religious truths, but rather of such as had been suppressed or corrupted by the papists or enthusiasts, or were opposite to errors falsely imputed to the protestants. For other points they refer us to the three creeds, whose articles of faith, though they repeat them not, they establish in that reference. They likewise refer to the scriptures of both Testaments, as containing all things necessary to salvation; in which scriptures, I presume, you will not say, that there is a dead silence with respect to the providence of God. But as you express an unwillingness to observe this omission in our articles, (whether this be true or false, God and your own heart best know) I will be kind enough to administer some relief; for though not largely dilated upon, neither is it wholly passed over in a dead silence: *Deus Creator et CONSERVATOR omnium, tum visibilium tum invisibilium*, is mentioned in the first article.

Again, eleven of these sixteen confessions take no notice of the resurrection of the dead.* The scriptures and the three creeds, as a summary of faith drawn from those scriptures, being received as the rule of faith in all protestant churches, explicit subscriptions, as symbols of particular churches,

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† Ibid.

* Confess. p. 15.

churches, were not necessary, to points in which no varieties of opinion had been. A particular subscribing to the belief of a resurrection would not have been necessary, if all Christians were known to believe it: thus, this very article was explicitly delivered in K. Edward VI.'s book, but left out in that of Elizabeth as unnecessary. But if any persons were known to doubt it, or disbelieve it, a necessity arose of inquiring whether a candidate for the office of a Christian teacher believed it or not. If St. Paul had heard cause to doubt whether Hymeneus and Philetus believed it, would he have ordained them on a general declaration that *they received the scripture as the word of God, and would instruct the people out of that only;*¹ and so have suffered *their word to eat as doth a canker, and overthrow the faith of some?*²

*In some of these churches the inconveniences of insisting on these tests of orthodoxy have been so great, that they have found it the wisest way either intirely to drop them, or to content themselves with some general declaration or promise from the minister, that he will not openly oppose them.*³ If you mean that some protestant churches have dropped *subscriptions* intirely, and content themselves with a general *promise* from the minister, that he will not openly oppose their established explanatory articles of faith; then such protestant churches continue evidences that they think explanatory articles of faith may be established; and that it is lawful and useful to prohibit any minister in that church to contradict them: which is absolutely contrary to your system. If you mean, as you seem to wish the reader would understand you, that some protestant churches having experienced the inconveni-

¹ Confess. p. 17.

² 2 Tim. xi. 17, 18.

³ Confess. p. 15.

ences of insisting on subscriptions, have entirely dropped them, without any equivalent, or nearly equivalent promise; it would be but fair to mention those churches, that we might examine what kind of security the ministers in those churches and states give to their governours, of their faith and peaceable behaviour: and what have been, and appear likely to be, the consequences of such relaxation. Till then, this must be placed among the heap of affirmations or insinuations without proof. Our dissenters here, I suppose, universally require confessions of faith at ordinations; and, I presume, would refuse to ordain a man, whose confession they thought erroneous or defective in any thing material. And being drawn up each by himself, I do not apprehend they are all expressed in scripture words only; nay, am assured that none of them are: which is an argument that such confessions would not be satisfactory. Amongst the very Quakers it is a rule, that "those who appear in a publick character to exhort and advise others, should give satisfaction to the members of the same community of the propriety of their mission." And although they do not require them to subscribe a declaration against water-baptism and the Lord's supper, yet undoubtedly they take care to know their minds about these and other points also; which amounts, in effect, to the same thing.

If they (the present governours of the church of England) had had the original work of reformation in their hands, together with the light and experience which the present and past ages have afforded, they would, it may be presumed, not have imposed a formal subscription.^p A note at bottom informs us,

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this

^p Lister to Dr. Formey, Lond. 1766, p. 44.

^p Confess. p. 16.

this was written in the year 1755. Some such like words were written by Dr. Chandler seven years before, from a speech of John Alphonso Turretine, spoken above forty years before that, to induce the then governours in the church of Geneva to drop subscriptions.* You apply to the present governours of our church the persuasion that Turretine had of the first imposers of subscription to their *Consensus* at Geneva: But your views are very different, though your words are so nearly alike. Yours is to abolish all subscription or equivalent promise to teach according to explanatory articles of faith: Turretine was only against establishing a *new* subscription, though he thinks all kinds of subscriptions whatsoever are great inconveniences in such matters as were then before them, such as *persons of all sides avow to be indifferent, and no ways essential to salvation*: yet
 * for the sake of peace, and out of respect to
 * those very regulations, he was willing that this
 * doctrine should be the only one that is taught;
 * and that they who are of contrary sentiments
 * shall not be allowed to teach them." All that was desired was to change *subscription* to such *unimportant* points into a *promise* not to preach contrary to them, 'in order to the preservation of
 * peace and union amongst themselves, and to
 * preserve an uniformity in the manner of their
 * teaching.'" Now if our goverhours knew by what better means to preserve this peace and uniformity in points *important and necessary to salvation*, as well as in others necessary for the better instruction of the people, I presume you do them no injury to suppose, that had they had the original work of reformation in their hands, they would

* Chandler's Case of Subscription, p. 173.

* Case of Subscription, p. 160.

* Ibid. p. 157.

would not have imposed subscription, but adopted this more effectual method of procuring the ends intended. But this had been quite contrary to your design in dropping subscriptions, which evidently is, that some of the now established doctrines of our church may be contradicted in the pulpit and overturned. Whether you would not think, when this was done, the opposite doctrines ought to be subscribed, or at least a promise made of saying nothing against them, is a question which I will not answer, but leave others to consider: and it well deserves their best consideration.

To shew the ill effects of established confessions in protestant churches, you complain, 1. That *the explications of so many minute points of scholastic theology . . . rendered their breaches among themselves, occasioned by these explications, utterly irreconcilable.* So far as these explications had this effect, of rendering protestant churches irreconcilable with each other, in necessary points, they were to blame. One (if they understood one another in contrary senses) must be wrong; and by amicable conference they should endeavour to discover what was mistaken. In points of indifference, and the outward ordering of the church, each hath an equal right to establish what she thinks expedient, in her circumstances, for order, decency, and edification. Here each would charitably suffer others to abound in their own sense: but in necessary points, in which all the protestant churches are agreed, to permit individuals to preach what doctrines they please, will be no means to *stop one popish mouth, or lessen the breaches amongst themselves.*

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Had

¹ Confess. p. 16.

Had they been contented with a solemn declaration on the part of teachers and pastors, that they received the scriptures as the word of God, and would instruct the people out of them only, leaving them at liberty to disown whatever, after proper examination, they judged inconsistent with these, in all human probability the instruments of popery would have declined more visibly, and the true ends of reformation have been more speedily, as well as more effectually, promoted.

Popish teachers had erected their mischievous system partly on misinterpretations of scripture : Was employing them, promiscuously with others, to interpret scripture according to their own prejudices, a probable method of calling off the people from popish errors ? Fanaticks were every day venting wild notions, which they imagined, or pretended, they saw in scripture : would licensing them too to preach them in all our churches have promoted the true ends of reformation more speedily ? Some evils have doubtless followed from confessions and subscriptions : they may take in too many articles, and be too minute. When there is opportunity this fault should be corrected : But there may be an extreme also on the other side. Would there have been less controversy, and more edification ? Would there not have been vastly more confusion amongst the people, if every man of every opinion had been let into orders, as a parochial guide, to teach his opinions freely ? You indeed say, *in all human probability* this would have more visibly sunk the interests of popery, and more effectually promoted the true ends of the reformation : but how does this probability appear otherwise than by giving your word for what you cannot know ?

Wise

Wise and good men have always thought the contrary in all protestant churches. If your method has been followed in any church, I presume you have not heard of any great good from it; else you would have told us. Indeed you do not seem quite clear whether controversies are good or bad things. Here and at page 6, you admit them to be bad, and argue from that principle: but at page lxxiii. of your preface you seem to think the contrary. As to the people being left at liberty to disown whatever, after proper examination, they judge inconsistent with the scriptures, subscription by the teachers makes no alteration in the case. Men who have subscribed articles may leave their hearers at liberty, as well as men who have not.

But you are disposed, after all, in your next paragraph, to apologize for the first reformers. Sir, I should have congratulated you heartily on finding in your book one single instance of good-nature, if it had not appeared to be a mere contrivance, to bring a heavier charge against the present rulers of the church of England. But may there not be some apology for them also? They have, as well as their predecessors had, the early practice of the Christian church to appeal to, *long before the tyrannical spirit of Rome prevailed*: * They have seen all the great and excellent men in all protestant churches, for two centuries, take the same method of confessions; and they have seen, in this age, some few religious men indeed, but all irreligious men in general, vehement enemies to them: they have seemed to see the absolute necessity of them in general, to prevent universal disorder; though carrying matters too far hath produced particular inconveniences.

* Confess, p. 25.

inconveniencies. They dread to run from one extreme to another: they dread the licentious turn of the present age, and the bitter spirit of many writers too much akin to yourself. They sincerely apprehend, after careful consideration, that popery would gain infinite advantage by throwing down all our fences: that papists, who even now give you such alarm, would become parish priests, and preach plenty of popery, pretending to preach it out of scripture only. They conceive also that Christian doctrine doth not consist solely in opposition to popery, but hath its fundamental articles, which every minister ought not only to avoid contradicting, but to inculcate; and which some may be wrong-headed enough not to see in the scriptures, or to imagine they see the contrary of them there: and these are surely not fit to edify such as are grounded in a quite different persuasion. Is it not possible that some, *who are capable and willing to examine the subject, without partiality and without hypocrisy,** may think thus, though you have not charity enough to believe it?

In those days nothing was thought to be sufficiently confirmed by scripture testimonies, without additional vouchers from the ancient worthies of the church: and accordingly, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Austin, and Jerome, regularly took their places on the same bench of judgement with Paul, Peter, James, and John.†

Here you charge the reformers with putting the fathers on a level with the apostles and evangelists, and giving them equal authority. This, sir, is an accusation against those venerable men, that happens to want the circumstance of truth: a piece of ingratitude towards those noble asserters
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* Confess. p. 25.

† Confess. p. 20.

and recoverers of Christian liberty that you ought to be ashamed of: Hear Luther in the beginning of his reformation, so early as the year 1520; what was his opinion on this point at that time? In his defence of the articles condemned by the bull of Leo X. he says, ' Let them be esteemed
' holy men, and fathers of the churches, yet are
' they mere men, not to be compared with the
' apostles and prophets, not superior or equal in
' authority with them, but subject to it.'* In this opinion he continued to his death; for in the last year of his life he writes, as before mentioned,
' We must ground our faith on nothing but the
' word of God alone: not on canons, or the
' sayings of the fathers, further than as they agree
' with scripture.'* Our own articles make *scripture only* their rule of faith. This was their foundation: but the Romanists insisted that the reformers did not understand the scriptures otherwise than by their private interpretation, contrary to the sense of the universal church. This led the reformers, in their disputations, to justify their interpretation by the judgement of the ecclesiastical writers and councils of the primitive church; in which also they had so much the advantage, that bishop Jewel challenged them to produce one catholic doctor, father, or general council, for the first 600 years, in support of any of the 27 points then in question between them. This was not their original plan; for Cranmer's challenge was, to prove against any, that the doctrine and religion

* Sint sancti viri et ecclesiarum patres, sed homines, et apostolis atque prophetis impares, et horum authoritati non prelati, nec æquati, sed subiecti. Vide Seckend. lib. I. sect. 31. §. LXXVII. p. 119. — Ideo uni et soli verbo Dei credendum est: non canonibus, non sanctorum patrum dictis, nisi quatenus cum verbo consentiant. Seckend. lib. III. sect. 37. §. CXXXIX. p. 677.

religion of the church of England was more pure than had been held in England these thousand years, so *that God's word may be the judge*. When they carried God's word to be ascertained by the primitive church, the fathers and general councils, Jewel joined issue, and beat them on their own appeal.

In process of time some particular persons began to see into this mistake. In our own country the learned Cartwright, in his dispute with archbishop Whitgift, about the year 1573, took the courage to appeal from the authority of the fathers, and to prescribe them narrower limits in the province of determining religious controversies.^a The first reformers and establishers of the church of England had before limited the authority of the fathers in religious controversies, by declaring in her VIth article, that *whatsoever is not read in the holy scriptures, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation*. But the puritans, by their foreman, the learned Cartwright, must have the honor of first discovering the mistake of making the fathers equal with the apostles. And is this true, sir? Did not our bishop Jewel discover as much before? Speaking of the fathers, he saith,
 ' We read their works ; we reverence them ; we
 ' give God thanks for them ; we call them the
 ' pillars, the lights, the fathers of God's church :
 ' we despise them not. This thing only we say,
 ' Were their learning and holiness ever so great,
 ' yet be they not equal in credit with the scriptures of God.'^b They indeed often appealed to the fathers to strengthen their own interpretation

^a Confess. p. 20, 21.

^b Defence of the Apology, p. 71.

tation of scripture : but that may be done without equalling them with the apostles, I presume ; for the aforesaid learned Cartwright is perpetually endeavouring to press them into his service, whenever he thinks he can catch them, and would defend the points in dispute betwixt the church and him by their authority. None are against the fathers, but when the fathers are against them.

Some few years after this, Erasmus Johannes, a schoolmaster at Antwerp, took still greater liberties with antiquity. . . . He proposed that all religious propositions should be expressed according to the simplicity of Christ and his apostles. . . . But the times were not yet ripe for the toleration of these sentiments ; and the poor man who was hardy enough to venture them with the publick, was obliged to fly his country. This hardy schoolmaster was obliged to fly his country for holding with the Arians, that Christ was created by the Father before all worlds ; which doctrine he believed to be according to the simplicity of Christ and the apostles : but being driven from Antwerp for this opinion, he fled to Poland, where he took shelter in the tents of Socinus, by whose instructions, and the offer of a parish on that condition, he changed his opinion, and believed Christ to be a mere man.† If his first opinion was (as he pretended) according to the simplicity of Christ and his apostles, his second, which contradicted it upon the authority of his Cracovian master, was not so : unless the scriptures teach contradictions. He did not, indeed, set the fathers on the same bench of judgement with Paul, Peter, James, and John, but he exalted the authority of Socinus above that of the apostles, and even of Christ himself.*

* Confess. p. 21, 22.

† Sandii Bibliotheca Antitrinitariorum, p. 87.

self. How far those who honor the memory of an eminent prelate of our own church, who died in 1761, will thank you for shewing how nearly alike he and the schoolmaster of Antwerp thought, I cannot say.

*When it was seen that his lordship had reduced his antagonists to the disagreeable necessity of holding, that new and unscriptural words would better fix the sense of scripture doctrine, than the words of Christ and his apostles, the clamor subsided.** His lordship's colleague, Erasmus Johannes, could not be admitted to the office of instructing a parish by Socinus, though they both agreed in acknowledging the same words of scripture, for instance, that *he* (Christ) *was before all things*; unless he would fix his sense of the doctrine contained in that scripture, and that too in Socinus's manner of interpretation. Erasmus Johannes understood the words as asserting that Christ was, in time, before every other creature: Socinus denied the words to be true in that sense; and that he was only in worth and excellence, as well as in dignity and power, before all other persons and things. Thus we see the first broacher of this opinion thought that other, that is, *new and unscriptural* words would better fix the sense of scripture-doctrine than the words of an apostle. And his lordship himself observes, that, with respect to Christ's own words, 'the apostles and evangelists were not superstitiously scrupulous in numbering his words; nay, nor so solicitous to relate the *very words*, and *those only*, which he made use of, . . . but thought it 'sufficient to represent exactly *the intent* of the whole.' Accordingly his lordship takes the liberty of explaining the institution of the Lord's supper in other

other words than those of the evangelists : ‘ The whole tenor and form of this institution,’ saith he, ‘ is in the figurative way of speaking ; and all expressions in it of the same sort ought to be understood in the same manner : for instance, the *cup*, in the words recorded by St. Luke and St. Paul, is allowed *not* to signify the *cup*, but the *wine* in the cup. This wine is allowed by all not to be itself the *new covenant*, nor to be changed (or transubstantiated) into the *new covenant* ; but only to be the *memorial* of the new covenant : . . . it follows, by all the rules of interpretation, agreeably to the way of speaking throughout the whole, that the *bread and wine* are *not* the natural *body and blood* of Christ, but the *memorials* of his *body and blood*’. Thus we see that *Erasmus Jobannes* and the *eminent prelate that died in 1761* were both driven to the necessity of using *new and unscriptural words*, supposing that they could thereby *better discover to others their sense of scripture doctrine, than by the words of Christ and his apostles*. The words of the prophets and apostles are sufficient for a man to express his own faith ; for he knows the sense in which he uses them : but when different senses have been fastened on them by different persons, he may not know whether another person, who uses the same words, holds the same faith ; and therefore, if he is concerned to know the truth of that matter, must try it by using other words. Which words do not better fix the sense of the scripture doctrine, but only discover whether he, to whom they are proposed, intends to express what, in the examiner’s judgement, is the true scripture doctrine by the scripture words.

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3 Plain Account, p. 14, 15, 17.

We have reason to hope, that our superiors will no longer bind either themselves or us to an implicit acquiescence in an authority which may occasionally be extremely inconsistent with our original obligations as Christians, as well as with the distinguishing principles of our profession as protestants.^a They do not, and our protestant superiors never did, require implicit acquiescence in the authority of the fathers, either of the primitive church, or of the reformation.

These venerable fathers (the latter) had certainly no right to prescribe articles of faith to us.^b But they certainly had a right to declare their own. The Christian civil state had certainly a right to approve it, if they judged it better fixed on the foundation of scripture than theirs was that opposed it; and therefore had a right to give it countenance and encouragement: and if its opposers held opinions detrimental to the state, they certainly had a right to require of their subjects a renunciation of such opinions before they could be intitled to their favors; life, liberty, and property being preserved to them.

*For a compendious view of the testimony of the fathers to the sufficiency of the holy scriptures as a rule of religion, the reader may consult a book intitled, The Divine Oracles, written by the learned and candid Mr. John Brekel, 1749.^c This book I have not seen, nor do I apprehend I have any want of it, as I have by me Cranmer's *Confutation of unwritten Verities*, whose second chapter is to prove, by the testimony of the fathers, *that the writings of the old fathers, without the written word of God, are not able to prove any doctrine in religion.* This is a further confirmation of your having misrepresented*

^a Confess. p. 26.

^b Ibid.

^c Confess. *ibid.* note.

misrepresented the first reformers of the church of England, by saying that they equalled the authority of the fathers to that of the scriptures themselves.

All imposed subscriptions to articles of faith and religious doctrines, conceived in unscriptural terms, and enforced by human authority, are utterly unwarrantable, and not to be defended but by arguments and pretences highly dishonourable to the sacred writings, and in many cases contradictory to the express contents of them. In your preface you went no further than *impositions not warranted by scripture*; now you proscribe all *religious doctrines conceived in unscriptural terms*; as if all religious doctrines, conceived in unscriptural terms, were doctrines not warranted by scripture. Yet you blame the church of England for omitting to teach a fundamental article of the Christian religion in her book of articles, and prove it by this argument, because she does not speak of the *providence of God*. Where, sir, in your whole Bible will you find *these words*? But the doctrine you suppose, as well as I, is warranted by scripture; and venture to express it in *unscriptural terms*; nay, censure our articles for not using the same unscriptural terms, though she has expressed the doctrine itself in equivalent terms. And in your note at pages 23, 24, you seem to allow preachers may endeavour to make the sense of scripture more *plain* or more *precise*, by using unscriptural terms. If religion be necessary to a state, human authority is warranted to establish that which they think the true one, and to expound it in as *precise* terms as they can. They do not *fix* the doctrines in order to impose them on any; but only *fix* the doctrines which they, by the aid of the

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ablest

* Ibid.

† Pref. xci.

ablest interpreters, believe to be true, and will encourage to be taught, and to which, for the sake of peace, they will not bear any publick and seditious contradiction. And so far go all the *unsubscribing* protestant churches, whose practice you recommend to us; for the manner of taking the security of their teachers, whether by subscription, promise, declaration, or exhortation, matters not. And how the articles of faith in the church of England can be justly charged as dishonorable to the sacred writings, which are professedly built on their authority, I leave you to make out; and in the mean time to consider, whether such an open and rude attack upon the established doctrines of your own church, would have been suffered in any other protestant church in Europe, except that of whole tyrannical and cruel treatment you so tragically complain.

You begin your second chapter
 CHAP. II. with considering *the claim of a right to establish confessions as tests of orthodoxy in protestant churches.* You do not tell us what you mean by these confessions established as tests of orthodoxy; whether the terms of admission to communion with the church, or the terms of being admitted to officiate as ministers in it: and you wander from one to the other in great confusion, by studiously avoiding to distinguish the several relations in which every Christian stands. With regard to that primary one which is betwixt Christ and a man's own conscience, no power on earth hath naturally any thing to do. The intercourse is purely spiritual: the grace of God cannot be commanded by man, it is God's mere gift: the returns of man are of the same kind, *in spirit and in truth*: he cannot believe to
 salvation

salvation by proxy, nor can another's good works be made over to him. But then, man's salvation being the purchase of Christ, who hath commanded, as the ordinary means to be intitled to this salvation, that a man *believe and be baptized*, a second relation rises to every Christian, betwixt himself and the church, by whose ministry he is to be taught the faith, and admitted to the privileges which Christ hath purchased, and united to the fellow-members of that body, of which Christ is the Head. And as this Christian society must exist within the limits of some one or more states, whether it be encouraged by them, or discouraged, every Christian hath duties incumbent upon him with relation to that particular state in which he lives: if persecuted, he is commanded by the apostles, who were under those circumstances, *to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, with patience suffering wrongfully for conscience towards God; to pray for them; and to assist them by paying tribute and custom*: If protected and encouraged by them in the profession of the same faith, religion alters not civil relations; the same duties are required, nay, with a stronger obligation, *rather doing them service, because they are faithful*.

So that although a man must answer to God for his own faith, yet he must be subject to the judgement of the church, whether his faith is such as will qualify him for admission into it. And to infer that upon protestant principles *every man is a church to himself*, is absurd; unless he is self-sufficient to teach himself, to baptize himself, to hold communion with himself, to excommunicate himself from himself, where he condemns himself, yet cannot bring himself to repentance, and to admit himself to himself again upon

repentance. Every church, or number of persons assembling for Christian worship and discipline, hath a right to judge for itself, who are intitled according to the rules of the gospel, to communicate with it, and who not. It may judge wrong; but it hath a right to judge as well as it can: else heathens and Mahometans must be admitted, if they desire it. This community, or they who are appointed to act in its name may also lay down further rules, which expediency seems to require, and all her members think lawful. You think that their *previous consent should be had*. But as human nature is such, that it will often be denied for slight reasons, why may not their subsequent compliance be sufficient? and why should they deny it in such a case? Cannot the time, the place, the office of worship, in different modes, rules of discipline for suspension, excommunication, receiving penitents, be otherwise established? How then will any of them ever be established? If, of two persons qualified for communion, one insists on such a thing being done at the communion, another on its being omitted, how is the church to behave? Must not the majority determine, and ought not the minority to submit, as far as in conscience they can? If any member change his mind, must the terms of communion be changed as often? But supposing the majority, with their guide or guides, think rules highly expedient, though not necessary, which a minority, disposed to be members, think unlawful, what is to be done? In my opinion such rules ought to be enacted, dispensed with, or laid aside, according to the degree of benefit apprehended from them, or the number of persons dissatisfied with them, or various

rious other circumstances, which may incline prudent persons one way or another. Here is much room to mistake; and there should be much charity and mildness on both sides. And indeed, on whatever point the difference is, the dissatisfied minority should be allowed to form churches for themselves in the best manner they can. And they, who cannot help esteeming one another hereticks or schismaticks, (which opinion may be formed, whether justly, or wrongfully, without malevolence,) should live together in neighbourly kindness, and as much mutual esteem as they can.

Further, under this second relation, if any be desirous of being a teacher in the church, he must be subject to the judgement of its governors, whether he be qualified for that office, *apt to teach*. Christian assemblies ought to have such ministers as will instruct them suitably to what the people, with the advice of those who are authorized to commission their ministers, take to be the necessary or important doctrines or duties of the Christian profession; to advance their progress in Christian knowledge and practice, and to guard them by proper arguments and admonitions against the opposite errors and sins. And therefore they have a right to be assured, by some fit method, as far as may be, that their ministers are disposed to instruct them in this manner. Else an episcopal protestant congregation might be obliged to have a Quaker or a popish priest for its minister. And one fit method of giving such assurance is, subscribing articles or confessions containing such doctrines and duties. So that to confound baptismal confessions and ministerial examinations together, is to perplex the question; unless *milk*

and *strong meat* are the same thing, and every Christian, who hath faith enough for admission into the church, hath therefore proficiency enough to be an instructor in it.

Further yet, as this Christian society must exist within the limits of some one or more particular state, it bears a third relation to that particular state under which each Christian society shall live. If discouraged and persecuted by it, still the members of this society are commanded to *obey the magistrates — suffer wrong — pray for them — and pay them tribute*: if protected by them, they are *rather to do them service, because they are faithful*; and in return to the state for its protection and encouragement, the church, or that Christian society so protected and encouraged, ought particularly to inculcate such gospel truths as the state thinks the occasions and circumstances of the times particularly require. But to infer from Christ's spiritual kingdom, that the civil magistrate hath no right to expect this service from a church, or Christian society, protected by him; and that his Christian subjects ought not to pay it, because Christ is their only lawgiver, is to confound all the three relations; and to conclude from a man's being accountable to Christ only for his faith and obedience, that *therefore* we must not believe and practise some doctrines of Christ, *because* the church recommends them when occasions peculiarly call for our attention to them; and *lest* such belief and practice should be of service to the magistrate and the peace of the community. Surely those who would subscribe to the whole bible, unless they meant by such general subscription to evade the doctrines taught in it, can have no objection to subscribe any part of it.

And

And when the state is become Christian, it may, on finding the generality of Christian churches within it to be such as it approves, and to be willing that the state should, for the sake of order and uniformity, exercise in their behalf a proper share of the powers which they had hitherto exercised separately amongst themselves, it may form them into a national church, on nearly the same conditions of communion and ministry which they had practiced before. And if it partly settles on the ministers, and partly allows private persons to settle on them, a competent allowance, where is the injury done? And why may not the whole body of the people be considered as consenting to such an ecclesiastical establishment, as well as to the civil establishment, though they may think that several things in both might be mended? If they think there are things in the former, with which they cannot in conscience comply, they will still be at liberty to dissent from you. You have joined together, in one, two suppositions quite unconnected, as if they were inseparable. *If, say you, the church of England hath a right to fix her own terms of communion, and in consequence of that to secure the obedience of her members by temporal rewards and punishments* — But how can a right to the latter be the consequence of a right to the former? The terms of communion with a national church may be fixed and established by law: yet no person be rewarded for complying with them, or punished for not complying with them, or subjected to any disadvantages on account of them. By some of the payments made by dissenters to the support of our established church, they are few or none of them sufferers, because they

bought the estates, out of which they make those payments, so much the cheaper; or if they were given them, they had no right to them without the burthen upon them. The legislature lays the rest of the payment on them for what it not only takes to be beneficial, but what really is beneficial to the publick; as undoubtedly so good an established religion as ours will be owned to be on the whole, even by such as in some points dissent from it. If tribute, which includes the publick charges of religion, was to be paid by Christians to their pagan princes, will they refuse it to Christian princes for the services of Christian religion? They cannot expect the legislature to establish any mode of it but what the community approves most: and therefore all should not only acquiesce in the maintenance of it, but think it an advantage. It may also in some cases, and in ours, be an advantage, not only to the publick, but in the end to dissenters themselves, that they are restrained from publick offices, to prevent the dangers of such evils as have happened, of a much more grievous nature than this restraint can be. Or, supposing it a disadvantage to them; yet many persons are restrained in many cases from what they have by nature an equal claim to with others, for the sake of an apprehended greater good to the community, arising or expected from it. In all these cases a legislature may mistake, and so may they who think it mistakes. When mistakes are evidently discovered, they should be rectified: but while a doubt remains, the presumption lies on the side of the legislature. And supposing it to be wrong, persons ought to be content with less than Utopian perfection.

But

But it must be further observed, that such restraints, even supposing them blameable, are no more punishments in ecclesiastical than in civil cases. They are only precautions; and, with us, gentle ones, whether prudent or not. Precautions imply only a danger; punishments a crime. The former ought always to be moderate; the latter just. Punishing a person for acting according to the judgement of his conscience, when he doth no injury, publick or private, is unjust; and though it were not, yet punishing him for it, even when he doth injury, beyond the exigency of the case, would be unjust. It may be said indeed, that if a man hath a right to do another any wrong, he hath an equal right to do him a greater; and subtle arguments may be brought to prove it. But plain common sense will not readily admit such a maxim: nor will human society be in a better condition by establishing it: for, in consequence of it, the lawfulness of great severities will be much oftener concluded from that of small ones, than the unlawfulness of small ones from that of great ones. And therefore it is not a discrete plea, that *if the church of England may secure herself by temporal penalties, however slight, the church of Portugal may secure herself by tortures and death.*

But all that your wanderings have led and forced me to say concerning dissenters from the communion of a church, is wide from the special point proposed by you, the terms of admission to the ministry in a church. To that therefore I return: and having already shewn, that there is a right of fixing these both in particular and national churches, I need only add, that excluding a man from being a minister in a congregation, where

where he hath no right to be one, is *not punishing* him: for though he spent his time and his pains with a view to it, he knew all the while that his prospect was but conditional. And though admitting him is indeed *rewarding* him, as the labourer is rewarded by his hire, surely it is not unequitable, that the people, or the publick, should give a recompence to one, who in their opinion promotes right notions and practice, while they refuse it to one who in their opinion labors to mislead them.

But I procede to examine your objections against *established confessions, as tests of orthodoxy*. You lay down the fundamental position, on which the authority of established confessions in protestant communions depends, in these words: *Every particular church, considered as a society, has a right, as other societies have, to secure its own peace and welfare, by all lawful means; and consequently, to prescribe such terms of communion as appear to be most expedient for the purpose; provided that nothing be required, under this pretence, which is contrary to the word of God, or inconsistent with the liberty of other churches*. And against this fundamental position you say it hath been answered in short, that *by admitting the principle of self-defence and self-preservation in matters of religion, all the persecutions of the heathens against the Christians, and even the popish inquisition, may be justified*.^{*} And here you refer us to bishop Hoadley's speech in Rapin; where we shall find just these very words, and not one word more. Therefore, as I pay no implicit obedience to his judgement, whatever you may, I take the liberty of insisting, that this short answer comes very short of being a good one: For these are *unlawful means*: and you yourself

* Confess. chap. ii. p. 28.

yourself have stated our principle to be only that we may defend ourselves by *lawful means, not contrary to the word of God*: Therefore our principle will not justify these; unless you suppose that heathen persecutions and popish inhumanities are agreeable to the word of God. You go on, and say, *If the church of England hath a right to secure the obedience of her members by temporal rewards and penalties, the church of Portugal may secure herself by the discipline of an holy office.*^a We do not affirm, but absolutely deny, that the obedience of the members of our church is to be secured by temporal rewards and penalties: neither is it true, or will necessarily follow, that wherever the latter of these may be justly inflicted, there tortures and death may. Surely, sir, you should have taken a little more pains to make out the connexion between refusing orders and benefices to persons unless they will subscribe, and putting them to death unless they will believe and do whatever they are bid: for it is not a plain one by any means.

You complain that bishop Conybeare, in his famous subscription sermon, has passed a fallacy upon us in arguing *from the consent required by the apostles to their doctrines, to the consent required by succeeding church governours to human articles.*^b Bishop Conybeare hath shewn, in his famous subscription sermon, that some scripture truths not only *may*, but *must* be expressed in other than scripture terms: ^c and till you have disproved his reasons, I must have leave to say, that *such human articles* (as you are pleased to call them) require the same consent to them as to the apostles doctrines, because they contain the same scripture truths. The authority which demands the consent

^a Ibid,^b Note at p. 30.^c P. 8, 9.

sent is neither that of the church's explication, nor that of the apostles ; but *the word of God, which we receive from them, we receive it not as the word of men, but indeed (as it is in truth,) as the word of God.*¹

In another note you tell us, by way of improvement upon honest old Rogers, as you call him, *that every intelligent Christian, with the scriptures before him, is, upon protestant principles, and in decrees of this nature, a church to himself.* I cannot, as I observed before, make any good sense of this odd expression, *a church to himself*; no, not by such protestant principles as you yourself laid down at page 2, where you say *the church is congregated by the word of God*; for how can an individual be congregated with himself? But whatever your meaning be, if every intelligent Christian, with the scriptures before him, *be a church to himself*, a great number of intelligent Christians, with the scriptures before them, judging and embracing certain truths, as contained in those scriptures, are *a church to themselves*: and if, according to *honest old Rogers*, whose judgement you recommend to us,² they are to avoid and reprove antichristianity and error, they must avoid the communion of any man whom they judge antichristian and erroneous, and leave him to the communion of that church, which he himself alone makes. If you mean no more by that paradoxical expression, than that he ought to determine for himself, it is true; but this respects only his spiritual relation betwixt Christ and his own soul, and is previous to his relation as member of a church: yet even then, in determining, he ought to allow some weight

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¹ 1 Thess. xi. 13.

² P. 31, note,

³ Cath. Doctr. Art. xx. Prop. 3.

and authority to the judgement of the church, as men skilled in the science they profess; and greater in proportion as he hath cause to think himself unqualified for judging. Thus persons of sense do in all other cases: and private judgement is very consistent with such deference to authority. Bishop Burnet hath not, as you say, *faintly insinuated*, but clearly stated, his sense of this matter, which is the true one. The proper dispositions, which he requires for bodies of men to judge rightly, are sincerity, diligence, and desire of God's direction. You think it *may be as difficult to find a body of men so disposed, as to find single persons without mistakes*. Now there never was a single person without mistakes. Did no body of men, sincere, diligent, and pious, that is, the majority of them, ever meet? Or would the agreement of such a majority in any doctrines, after debate, be likely to produce greater and more errors, than the same men, without consultation had together, publishing severally their respective mistakes and prejudices?

You say, if the church's authority were vigorously exerted and applied in all cases, (as it ought to be if the authority be real,) and if, on the other hand, the people were diligent and careful in searching the scriptures every one for himself, (as all protestants agree they ought to do,) the consequence would most probably be, that the far greater part of honest and sensible Christians would be excluded from the communion of every church which has an established confession.² The church's authority, of which you speak, is that of framing and settling confessions of faith and doctrine for all her members; and instead of exerting and vigorously applying it in all cases, she ought to exert it in none where she

² Confess. p. 32,

she is not commissioned. There are numberless questions in which the church hath no right to decide, or give her judgement : but she ought to give it, and act upon it, in cases to which the scriptures direct, admission to baptism, and commission to teach : in these cases she thinks she hath a right to exercise this authority ; for Christ having commanded his apostles to *go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;*⁷ and said that *he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ;*⁸ they infer that *belief* is a qualification for admission to baptism ; that the candidate for baptism, if a capable subject, is to give a satisfactory account of his faith before he can be admitted into the church, for which there must be some rule of judging ; and that instruction in the necessary points must therefore ordinarily go before belief, though it be submitted to the private judgement of the candidate ; and then *if he believes, he may be baptized.*⁹ A scriptural right they also think they have, in trying the qualifications of every one who is a candidate for the pastoral office, being directed to *lay hands suddenly on no man ;*^b to *prove him whether he be apt to teach, holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*^c Of this therefore they who are to give the commission are to judge. And if this be done in forms generally agreed on and publickly known, it is rather an exertion of *kindness* in the church than of *authority*, to which none are compelled to subscribe ; but such as are convinced, and do it *willingly* and *ex animo* are allowed to be qualified as teachers, and

⁷ Matth. xxviii. 19.

⁸ Mark xvi. 16.

⁹ Acts viii. 37.

^b 1 Tim. iii. 1, 10.

^c Tit. i. 9.

and are not subjected to the arbitrary judgement or caprice of the examiner. Such church authority, in both instances, is only one motive to believe the doctrines which she professes ; and each person will apply it to assist his own judgement, as far as he thinks it needful and right. And these established confessions (of which the apostle's creed is one) must have been very unfortunately formed, if they would have excluded the far greater part of honest and sensible Christians from the communion of every church in Christendom. But I rather fear that many of those whom you call *honest and sensible Christians* would not have been deemed or thought Christians at all, not having faith sufficient to qualify them for baptism by the universal judgement of the whole church of Christ.

You indeed *believe there is scarce one of these confessions, to which a knowing and a thinking Christian can assent in all points.*^a It is well that we are not bound to believe as you believe ; for under the term *these confessions* the apostles creed must be comprehended, which shews that this condemnation is presumptuous enough. And if you are one of these *honest and sensible, knowing and thinking* Christians, as I suppose you conceive yourself to be, what but the spirit of contradiction, which so violently possesses you, could move you to be so angry with *a certain writer in the Daily Gazetteer of Sept. 30, 1766, for pronouncing, that the author of the Confessional cannot, consistently with his principles, be a member of any established church.* Methinks you should rather have taken it for a compliment ; though I by no means think it one. If this censure is false, how do you prove that you are, consistently with your own principles, a member

^a Confess. p. 34.

* Note at p. 32.

member of any established church. You do not attempt it: but labor to excuse yourself for not being so. You speak (preface, p. l.) of a great preface, as *vulnerable only in point of his conformity to the church of England*. You say in your book, p. 244. that *consistency requires the opponents of the high-churchmen to withdraw from the church of England, and bear their testimony against her in deeds, as well as words*. You endeavour to shew, throughout your whole book, that established churches, as such, are unlawful. Of which of them then can you, *consistently* with your principles, be a member? And how is merely affirming that you cannot, a *fulminating censure*? But you are so apt to fulminate censures against others, that you fancy nobody can mean to treat you with mildness. On this occasion you introduce (for what purpose I cannot see, unless it be to enable you to sneer at a person of whom you know nothing,) a saying of lord Clarendon, ‘He who will profess all the opinions held by the most ancient fathers, and observe all that was practiced in the primitive times, cannot be of the communion of any one church in the world.’ Essay, fol. 1727, p. 226. What his lordship particularly meant, or whether he said true, or mistook, is not worth inquiring. You are certainly secure from being excommunicated on the account which he mentions, and have not been threatened on any other. You go on to say that you *profess cordially to believe whatsoever the apostles taught, and are desirous to observe whatever was practised in the first Christian churches settled by them, so far as you can discover it in the scriptures*. So do we. Which understands them best, the reader must be left to judge. They required belief before baptism, and for that purpose inter-
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gated the candidates : *they* required pastors should be *proved*, whether they were *apt to teach*, before they were commissioned to preach : *We* do the same. The particular forms of confession, or probation, which they used, we know not ; but we have taken care to preserve those which we can discover from the earliest antiquity, or, in imitation of the apostles, when new doubts arose, to determine them, not by private judgement singly, but in due conjunction with the deliberating judgement of the governours of the church. *You* deny that any confession, or any determination, should be made, but every man be left to determine for himself ; and on such determination to claim baptism and orders. Who is the most apostolical ?

But persons thus admitted to baptism or orders, in your opinion, are not *honest and sensible Christians* ; for *the adherence of such numbers to the peculiar doctrines of the church from which they receive their denomination, and even to some doctrines common to the creeds and confessions of ALL churches, which call themselves orthodox, is owing to their IGNORANCE, their INDOLENCE, their SECULARITY, or the early PREJUDICES of education.*^f Such is the charity of a *knowing and thinking Christian* ! Such the peremptory decision of an advocate for freedom of thinking, and latitude of interpretation, that all who think or interpret scripture differently from himself are knaves or fools ! I thank God, however you may be *a church to yourself*, that you yourself are not the established church, with as much power to *punish*, as you assume to *judge and determine* of others.

You assert, that inferring an authority in the church to establish confessions, from the indisposi-

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tions

^f Confess. p. 34.

tions and incapacities of the people to examine and judge for themselves, is an argument that *would equally vindicate the church of Rome with respect to many of her impositions.*^s I answer: We allow and insist that the people have a capacity of examining and judging, but a capacity which wants assistance, as that of most persons doth in most cases: and if not in this, teachers of religion are needless. Now selecting out of scripture, and proposing the fundamental articles of faith and practice for the people, and requiring the profession of such further truths for ministers as are highly useful for them to teach, though not absolutely necessary for all to believe, is an useful method of assisting both. And the right of doing this cannot vindicate the church of Rome in requiring things to be declared necessary or true, which the scripture hath not declared to be such. Nor indeed do I see, how preserving in the church a small number of indifferent ceremonies can vindicate, or even excuse, the church of Rome in having introduced so monstrous a load of observances, many of them singly very improper: or how, on the other hand, rejecting the most and latest of them shews the necessity of rejecting the few that were early. One of our first English reformers, who had Christian fortitude enough to die for his perseverance in opposing unscriptural impositions of doctrines, saith of this latter sort, 'If it were only one trifling ceremony, or if it were some one thing of itself indifferent, (although I could wish nothing should be done in the church which did not edify the same) yet, for the continuance of the common quietness, I could be content to bear with it.'^a And surely

^s Ibid.^a Conference with Latimer, Obj. 4.

surely he might, with equal reason, have said the same thing concerning two or three.

You go on to say, *Indispositions and incapacities in the clergy would be but an awkward reason for making their assent and subscription to confessions an indispensable condition of being admitted into the church as teachers.*¹ The indispositions and incapacities of the people to examine and judge for themselves without help are certainly a good reason for the governours of the church to recommend a form of doctrine for their instruction; and that will evince the necessity, without supposing like indispositions and incapacities in the clergy, of recommending to the teachers the same form of doctrine, as a direction for their instructing the people committed to their charge. St. Paul beseeches the people, *that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you.*² For this end he prescribes these means to the clergy, *that they charge some (suspected of unsoundness in the faith) that they teach no other doctrine.*³ *Take heed unto thyself, and to thy doctrine.*⁴ *These things command and teach.*⁵ *These things teach and exhort.*⁶ *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me.*⁷ Did St. Paul suppose Timothy indisposed or incapable? Did he not give this charge as the best means by which the pastors and teachers might edify the body of Christ, till we all come in the UNITY OF THE FAITH, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man.⁸

You complain that the test act brings many men to our altars, who would never come there of choice,

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or

¹ Confess. p. 34, 35.

² 1 Cor. i. 10.

³ 1 Tim. i. 3.

⁴ iv. 16.

⁵ iv. 11.

⁶ vi. 2.

⁷ 2 Tim. i. 13.

⁸ Ephes. iv. 12, 13.

*or on a religious account.** It brings no one. It only forbids those to have places who do not come. And so doth requiring the oaths of allegiance and supremacy forbid those to have places who will not take them. But if bad men take the sacrament, or Jacobites the oaths, nothing but their own wickedness brings them to do it. As to the mention that was made of some Jews in K. William's reign coming to our Christian altars to qualify themselves for naturalization, the London Magazine is not authority to prove, that any such mention was made by any body; and falsehoods are often mentioned as true. Yet supposing the fact, it would only prove that such Jews were bad men. We know oaths are every day imposed to prevent frauds in the revenues: it is said they are often broken, and perjury added to cover frauds. If such oaths and the Test Act, in the event, prove to be snares and temptations, one would wish them removed, provided some other security were substituted. But discharging the clergy from obligations to instruct the people and the people's consciences in the doctrines of our church, and leaving all men at liberty to take orders and benefices in it, and teach what they please, will, I apprehend, be no sufficient remedy of these evils.

*Certain it is, in so far as the laity are allowed not to be bound by these church confessions, the point of right to establish them, as tests of orthodoxy, is fairly given up, as well for the clergy as the laity — unless the clergyman may be obliged to teach doctrines which the layman is not obliged either to believe or practice.** That is, because the layman is not bound to believe and practice certain things as terms of communion, the clergyman should not be

* Note, at p. 36.

* Confess. p. 36, 37.

be bound to teach them as truths of importance. Yet evidently, if they are truths of real and great importance, of which the presiding power in each church must judge for itself, the clergyman should be examined whether he believes them; and if he doth not, he should not be admitted to teach in that church; and if he doth, he should teach suitably to what he hath professed. Nor are the people free from obligation in regard to such points. They are bound, not indeed to believe all that he saith, but to hear and consider, and believe all that they find reason to be persuaded is true. Both perhaps are encouraged to their respective duties, by being thereby rendered capable of emoluments in the state. And it must be owned that, for the sake of emoluments, hypocrites and villains, Jews, Turks, infidels, and hereticks, may subscribe, or give the strongest outward proof of believing what is required: but neither church nor state are answerable for their impiety: they have taken all the prudent care in their power, and the guilty, convicted only by their own consciences, must be left to the final judgement of Christ. So that, *in foro conscientie*, whatever the clergyman is obliged by the word of God to teach, the layman is obliged by the word of God to believe and practice, so far as he hath the means of learning it, and being convinced of it. But a man may, without forfeiting his title to communion or salvation, mistake or be ignorant of several things, which yet, both for the honor and edification of the church, a minister may be so far obliged to teach, that he may be justly required to declare his belief of them, as an assurance that he will not contradict, but inculcate them. One who believes that there is a purgatory, that clergymen ought not to marry, that capital

punishments, war, and oaths are unlawful, may receive the sacrament and go to heaven. But a candidate for orders or preferment may with reason be repelled, if he refuses to declare himself on these heads, because very bad consequences would follow, if he were to preach false doctrine concerning them, or even omit to preach the true, on proper occasions. And therefore Mr. La Roche might well commend the wisdom of our national church in this respect.

Whatever may be left to the prudence and discretion of church-governours, there is so much more left to the conscience of every Christian in his personal capacity, that it greatly beboves such governours to beware they encroach not on a province which is without their limits. Here you seem to admit that something is left to the prudence of church governours. There are general directions in scripture concerning the trial of teachers, and the soundness of their faith: but general directions must be followed by such particular methods as appear most expedient. And this needs not interfere *with the conscience of any Christian in his personal capacity.* Expedients of human prudence should indeed be used with great moderation: but this proves not that they should not be used at all.

The subscription required of candidates for orders, which you particularly instance as *unseasonably interfering with the dictates of other mens consciences,* is designed to prevent diversity of opinions as far as *they should* be prevented, and subscription *can* prevent them. How many subscribe in different senses, and how many in no sense but that of wanting preferment, you cannot know; and you might just as well have said

* Confess. p. 39.

* Confess. p. 42.

said one tenth, or one third, as one fifth. Certainly teaching different opinions is lessened by subscription: and were there no subscription, still too many, indeed more, would go into orders merely for preferment.

No church can have a right to establish any doctrines, but upon the supposition that they are true. That is, in the judgement of the establishers they must be supposed to be true: but from the fallibility of their judgement they may in fact be otherwise. Yet this will not destroy their right to use their judgement in this case. If religion be necessary to a state, the rulers of the state must give it publick support; but in such manner as to injure no one. They can support religion no otherwise than by supporting what they, in their respective states, think the true one. If they mistake which that is, they will make a wrong *exercise* of their right. In strictness of speech, no man hath a right to do wrong: yet a man, having a right to make a will, may *legally* make a very unlesonable and blameable one. And a judge, having a right to pass sentence in a cause, may *legally* pass a very erroneous one. He hath authority, and it is his duty to decree according to the best of his understanding. If he errs, it is a misfortune incident to the present state of things: if he doth not decide according to the best of his ability, God will punish him. And the like is the case of rulers in regard to religion. They have no power to require from others the profession of religious doctrines, which those others do not believe. This would be invading the most sacred of all privileges. But they have a rightful power to attract the notice of their subjects to such doctrines as they think important to the pub-

lick, by providing that they shall be publickly taught; and to see that the persons whom they employ for teachers be, as far as can be known, really disposed to teach them. Whether they assure themselves of this, by subscriptions to an established form of words, or by declarations made by each of them in his own words, is not essentially different: though the former seems to be the more equal method, and less liable to abuse, both on the side of candidates for orders or benefices, and of those who admit them. The legislature doth not in either case impose a confession of belief on the persons concerned, as Dr. Stebbing hath long ago shewn, but only informs itself, so far as is needful, what their belief is, in order to know whether they are in that respect fit for the office to which they desire to be admitted.

*If the doctrines established in one are true, the contrary doctrines established in another church must be false; and I presume no church will contend for a right to establish false doctrines: — in consequence, none had a right to establish any doctrines, but with the unanimous consent of all the rest.** Now, sir, you have elsewhere told us, that every intelligent Christian, with the scriptures before him, is, upon protestant principles, and in decrees of this nature, *a church to himself*; by which I understood you to mean, that every person may judge for himself, and believe as he sees cause. Let us then only substitute *intelligent Christian* in the place of *church*, and *believe for establish*, and then judge of the truth and reasoning of the above passage. † No intelligent Christian can have a right to believe any doctrines but upon supposition that they are true. If the doctrines be-
† believed

* P. 52, 53.

believed by one intelligent Christian be *true*, the contrary doctrines believed by another intelligent Christian must be *false*; and I presume no intelligent Christian will contend for a right to believe *false* doctrines. — In consequence, no intelligent Christians have a right to believe any doctrines, but with the unanimous consent of all the rest. And what now becomes of the right of private judgement? and would not the consequence be, that we should have no right to believe any thing?

It is true, protestants of one state or country have been tender of condemning the confession of those of another, by any publick sentence. — But what instance is there upon record, where this liberty (I suppose you mean the liberty of framing a confession of faith for itself) hath been allowed (as the ordinate principle manifestly requires it should be) to more than one church in the same protestant state? If the confession of any one state or country is not condemned as contrary to scripture, the minority in such state ought to submit and assent to the confession of it. Yet the state of England, from the first establishment of her confession, can afford an instance, where the liberty of dissenting from it has been allowed to the French, Dutch, and Italian protestant churches, in the beginning of its reformation; and to several dissenting congregations (among her own subjects) at this day.

Every party, in every protestant state, has, by turns, made some attempts to have their religious tenets established by publick authority. In every state some one party has succeeded; and having succeeded, imposes its own confession upon all the rest; excluding all dissenters from more or fewer of the common privileges

*privileges of citizens.*² The common privileges of citizens are protection of lives, liberties, and property: to places of trust, influence, honor, and profit, none can be intitled, but upon the terms of the community. If then there be a party attempting to have their religious tenets established by publick authority, who, although, *ex hypothesi*, they do not condemn the confession now established, yet will never be contented, in the opinion of one of their own friends, (Rapin, in his dissertation on Whigs and Tories) till they have totally destroyed the whole church of England, and have given proof of it in their solemn league and covenant; all lovers of truth, peace, and religious liberty, must endeavour to restrain such intolerant disturbers of the publick tranquillity, within such bounds as not to leave them the power of trampling on the common rights of mankind, by destroying our present happy constitution. You acknowledge, (p. 55, in the note,) that the Westminster confession, which hath all along been the favorite presbyterian one, ascribes the same authority to the church, that the first part of our 20th article doth. And though several of the dissenting ministers, in 1727, refused to subscribe that confession, it doth not appear that they scrupled this part of it. And therefore you have no right to *acquit* them, while you *condemn* us: but we have ground to apprehend, that had they power, we should suffer at least as much, perhaps a great deal more, from their exercise of church authority, than they do now from ours. You give us another instance of Calvinistical intolerance, at the synod of Dort, in banishing the remonstrants.* This, however intended, is no censure on the church of England, which

² Ibid.

* Confess. p. 56.

which disclaims their principles and their practice.

But churchmen complain in adversity, who in the day of their exaltation carried church power as far as it could stretch: as an instance of this, you produce the ingenious bishop Taylor, who asserted, against the task-masters of those days, (in 1647,) that 'if we have found out what foundation Christ and his apostles did lay, that is, what body and system of articles simply necessary they taught and required of us to believe; we need not, we cannot, go any further for foundation; WE CANNOT ENLARGE THAT SYSTEM OR COLLECTION.' But when the shattered vessel came to be refitted — what did the ingenious bishop Taylor do then? — why nothing — but the skilful pilots adopted the old enlarged system.^b In which representation there seems to be wanting both argument and truth. There wants argument, because pilots in 1660 might adopt the enlarged system, without any reflection on bishop Taylor, who thought justly in 1647; unless he had been one of those pilots, and had changed his sentiments, with the change of circumstances. But neither did he change his sentiments, nor did the pilots in their day of exaltation act contrary to his sentiments in adversity; which destroys the truth of your representation. In the passage to which you refer, he does not recommend the scriptures at large, as the foundation of necessary belief, (there being more things revealed in them than it is necessary for all men to know;) but a system of necessary truths collected from it, the apostle's creed, which he makes the tessera of a Christian, to which the very words you quote refer, *We cannot enlarge THAT SYSTEM OR COLLECTION.* Yet in that very

^b Confess. p. 55, and note.

very treatise, written under *the task-masters of those days*, ' he doubts not but our blessed Saviour intended,' (from the instance of the Jerusalem council,) ' that the assemblies of the church should be judges of controversies, and guides of our persuasions in matters of difficulty,' — ' in order to the conservation of the faith, for the doctrinal rules of good life, and all that concerns the essential duty of a Christian.' That, ' when acts and doctrine have influence upon communities of men, whether ecclesiastical or civil, the governours of the republic or church respectively are to do their duty in restraining those mischiefs — The proceedings indeed may be *fallible*, upon an *infallible* ground, and they may do their duty possibly with the piety of a saint, though not with the understanding of an angel.' Nor did he alter his sentiments *in the day of his exaltation*; for he maintains the same opinions in his *Ductor Dubitantium* in 1660. He calls the apostles creed ' the fulness of believers, the characteristick of Christians, the sign of the orthodox, the sword of all heresies, and their sufficient reproof, the unity of belief, sufficient, full, immoveable, unalterable.' That before princes were Christian, the church was governed by their spiritual guides, who had authority from God, in all that was *necessary*, and of *great conveniency* next to necessity: — in that which was not primely necessary, but emergently and contingently came to be *useful and fit*, God only left in his ministers a power to persuade, . . . and gave to the people the spirit of love and obedience. — But when princes be-

* Liberty of Proph. §. vi. p. 101.

^d P. 103.

* P. 210, 211.

^f Book ii. p. 514.

' came Christians, . . . and took care of the external regiment of the church, . . . then the ecclesiastical laws were advised by bishops, and commanded by kings, . . . and all can be compelled that need it.'* The nautic wit of your note may, for ought I can tell, be intirely in the stile of a boatswain; and that I may not seem to avoid quoting it from envy, I here recommend it to the reader, that he may not lose the entertainment, nor you the reputation of it. I know not how to return it, but by an address to *the vessel itself*, in words at least as delicate as yours; which I can venture to say, because they are not my own.

O navis, referunt in mare te novi

Fluctus ? — sine funibus

Vix durare carinæ

Possunt imperiosius

Æquor. —

— *Tu, nisi ventis*

Debes ludibrium, cave.

HOR. lib. i. od. xiv.

The opinion of the remonstrants
CHAP. III. concerning confessions of faith, altho' they had suffered grievously by one unwarrantably enjoined, is the subject of your third chapter; which you begin with observing, that *it had been objected to confessions in general, that they derogated from the authority and sufficiency of the scriptures.*^b But is this true of such confessions as make *the sufficiency of the holy scriptures for salvation* one of their articles, and establish its authority so far, as to assert, that *whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is* not

* Book iii. p. 234, 235. † Confess. chap. iii. p. 58.

*not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation?*¹

Further, it had been objected, *that they encroached upon the liberty of private conscience.*² It is not only the right, but the duty of private conscience, to hear and judge: but it may, and in some cases must, be assisted, or it will not be able to judge at all: *how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?*³ And surely all interpreting and explaining the scriptures is not an encroachment on the liberty of private conscience; for Christ himself opened his disciples the scriptures, and expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.^m Persons, who are strangers to the language in which the scriptures were written, must have them *translated*; when translated, if the words are used in a peculiar sense, and not the customary one, such words must be *interpreted*: when this is done, if the customs, antiquities, opinions, or history of former times must be explained, before the ordinary reader can judge of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas which form the truth or falshood of any proposition, these must be *explained* before private conscience can judge of it: whence I infer, that explications of scripture, which in some cases necessity demands, and Christ's own example warrants, are not always encroachments on the liberty of private judgement. Now one light, in which confessions are to be considered, is, that they are explications of scripture by a number of learned men, concerning some of its principal doctrines.

You

¹ Article vi.

² Confess. p. 58.

³ Rom. x. 15.

^m Luke xiv. 27, 32.

You indeed tell us, *that they tended to nothing better than separation and schism.*^a But does separation and schism, occasioned by a confession, prove that confession to be erroneous? Does not St. Paul, after mentioning schisms, as existing among the Corinthians, tell them, that there *must also be heresses amongst them, that they which are approved may be made manifest?*^b And if a confession is necessary to manifest them, why should it not be used? Your expedient indeed must be allowed an effectual one, that to avoid schism there should be *no* confession.

But there have been so many abuses in these confessions, that the remonstrants, who defend their use, you inform us, are obliged to set out with ample concessions. *Undoubtedly, say they, [the remonstrants] those phrases and forms of speaking, in which God and Christ delivered themselves at first, for the instruction of unlearned and ordinary men, must needs be sufficient for the instruction of Christians in all succeeding ages.* Having not seen this confession of the remonstrants, I am forced to take your account of it. But the authority of the conceders, I suppose, you will not admit as decisive: the truth of the concession is to be examined. Christ delivered many forms and phrases of speaking, which (besides that they were first spoken in Syriack, and afterwards interpreted by the evangelists into Greek, and needed further to be translated into the respective tongues of unlearned and ordinary men) were so mystically and figuratively expressed, that the apostles and disciples did not understand them without an explanation: some of them appeared to be such *hard sayings*, that many of his disciples

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^a Confess. *ibid.*

^b 1 Cor. xi. 19.

^c Confess. *ibid.*

went back, and walked no more with him.^a Many things the spirit of truth was afterwards to lead them into, which were to be committed to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also.^c These truths were the same in substance, though different in expression, called therefore *the apostle's doctrine*.^e For though Peter, Paul, and Luke, preach the same doctrine, yet they preach it not in the same words: the writings of the two latter discover a tincture of their learning, which is not so perceivable in those of Peter. Their agreement in doctrine served as a rule, by which other teachers were to guide themselves, directing the purpose, but leaving the expression to be suggested by the taste of the speaker, or accommodated to the capacity of the hearer. This doctrine, as to the substance of it, was to be the means of bringing the hearers to the unity of the faith; and at the same time was a test by which to try the teachers. According to this doctrine the catechumens were to make their baptismal professions, and *profess a good profession*.^f According to this doctrine the teachers were to be proved, whether they *beld fast the faithful word, as they had been taught*.^g No forms of such confession or examination are preserved in scripture, though the *substance* be there recorded; nor are any of those forms any where to be found, if not in the ancient creeds. Confessions therefore may be made, and that not in the very words and phrases first delivered by Christ, for they are irrecoverably lost; but as expounded by Christian teachers. Nor can they always be confined with good effect to those words of the first teachers which are recorded in scripture: for if persons arise, as confessedly persons have arisen, who

^a John vi. 60, 66.^c 2 Tim. xi. 2.^e Acts ii.^f 1 Tim. vi. 12.^g Titus i. 9.

who have perverted those words to a wrong meaning, in matters of the greatest importance, how shall we discover with whom we may or may not communicate, as sound Christians, or whom we may or may not appoint for teachers of sound doctrine, but by trying whether they hold the scripture words in what appears to us the true sense? Now this trial can be made only by using such phrases for ascertaining the sense, as have not hitherto, and we may hope will not, become ambiguous in the mouths of those who use them? The need of this method may not immediately happen: and till it doth, scripture expressions may suffice. But when it doth, such confessions not only may, but must, still continue in the church: and they may be *divine* as to the substance, though the form may be *human*; and the church cannot *well be* without such human explanations, if it is possible for it to *be* at all.*

*The Remonstrants, to recover their ground, say, . . . It cannot seem unprofitable, much less unlawful or hurtful, if more ministers of Jesus Christ do, by mutual consent, joint studies and endeavours, . . . declare their judgements upon the meanings of scripture, and that in certain composed forms.*² You say it is no easy matter to discover the drift of this argument: and so say I, if what you further say be true, that *the Remonstrants in that passage do not mean to insist on the superior influence and authority of more ministers, in the business of expounding the scripture, in comparison with single pastors or professors.*³ But they certainly do mean so, when they modestly say, ‘if the explication of a *single* pastor be not unprofitable, the explication of *more* pastors cannot seem so:’ and you are sensible this is their meaning, by quoting Dr. Stebbing

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* See Confess. p. 59.

2 Confess. p. 60.

3 Ibid.

bing to the same purpose. To which your reply is, that this means, in plain English, *You will always be safest with the majority.* And urge, that upon any supposition of this nature, the Belgic confession had an authority which rendered the Remonstrants' revolt from it inexcusable. Both the Remonstrants and Dr. Stebbing manifestly mean, that sufficient abilities and integrity supposed, nineteen in twenty agreeing in the same interpretation of scripture, are more likely to pitch upon the true meaning, than one who should interpret the same scripture in a different sense. Neither of them exclude a possibility of error in the majority, only a less likelihood of erring. Much less did they mean to deny, that a packt council, where the leaders had worldly views for their aim, confederated with ignorant, prejudiced, or servile compliers, might bring forth a wrong determination: but even then the majority without doors would probably be against them. Such considerations therefore will not drive men headlong into the established religion, whatsoever it be. We have still the scriptures and our own judgement in cases plain and evident; and whatever deference we may give, in cases of doubt and difficulty, to the judgement of learned men in their own profession, (especially to a majority of them,) we are in no danger of submitting to a synagogue of Pharisees, or a Turkish divan, as they are not composed of men skillful in those scriptures which we make our rule of faith: and the notorious partiality of the council of Trent, and the synod of Dort, will incline but few ingenuous inquirers to yield up their own reason a slave to their determinations. The synod of Dort was convened in malice and protected in policy, and came not to examine the truth,

truth, but to punish the Remonstrants; themselves acknowledging, that they came not to dispute, but to condemn.* And having a decree of admission written before they came into the synod, they asked the foreign divines their judgement, hoping it would have been answerable to their decree; but finding it was otherwise, without so much as laying their heads together for consultation, they published the decree which they had before prepared; as Mr. Hales of Eton relates it, who attended that synod.† From such prejudice, I presume, you will think a revolt not wholly inexcusable.‡

You ask, *If the scriptures are opened and explained to the people in easy and familiar expressions, by their ordinary pastors, what possible use can you find for a systematical confession?* The use of giving greater assurance both to the governours of the church and the people, that the scriptures are rightly explained to them.

Ministers are full as likely to be fallible in a body, as in their personal capacity. Reasons against this assertion have been given before.

It may not be improper to strengthen those reasons by the opinion of the primitive Christians, especially as you declare your assent to the practice of the apostolical times. These thought otherwise than you do, even when their ministers were the inspired apostles themselves; for, dissatisfied with the judgement of Barnabas and Paul about a certain question, they called for the determination of a council; and the assent, which they withheld from two of the apostles in their personal capacities,

* Ad judicandum quippe, non ad disputandum, se convenisse aiebat synodus. — Acta et scripta synodalia Dor-
dracena. Pref. ad lectorem, p. 5.

† Letters, p. 60. ‡ Confess. p. 61. § Confess. p. 62.

ties, they yielded to them when assembled in a body. And unless you imagine that your bold assertions are sufficient proofs, your own performance would be evidence against you, and prove that *all examination is not precluded by established confessions*, though you, in defiance of facts, assert it is; nor are the people constrained by them to acquiesce in a precarious system.

You affirm that *these formularies of doctrine, abounding in artificial and scholastick terms, are rather apt to perplex and confound things that are otherwise clear and plain, than to illustrate any thing with a superior degree of perspicuity.* When heretics have wrested and tortured scripture expressions in support of their own errors, and other false and groundless doctrines have been palliated and clothed in scripture language, the sense, which persons in those times and places fix on scripture phrases relative to those points, becomes uncertain, though the original sense of such phrases be clear enough: and therefore it is necessary to find out terms which at present are of more precision, at least in treating with these persons.

You go on to say, that *opinions maintained by scripture authority, have been condemned as noxious errors; nay, noxious errors too have sometimes procured themselves to be established by another party of confessionists and creed-makers: in which case these formularies, far from being of utility, serve only to destroy the force of each other.* Now that councils have erred is most certain: that they have determined one contrary to another is also certain; and therefore we must make use of private judgement, as well as theirs, in the interpretation of scripture. But hath private judgement never erred? Has not one man's been contrary to another's?

• Acts xy. 31.

† Confess p. 64.

‡ Confess. p. 65.

other's? Hath it not interpreted scripture in contradictory senses? And must therefore scripture, publick confessions of faith, and reason itself, be all discharged together as blind guides? To this your reasoning tends. And if so, we must have no religion at all, having no rule of religion. But, I beg you, let us rather call them all back again, each to his due place and rank, and make the best use of them that we can. The force of one formulary may be weakened, yet by no means destroyed by another: and even contrary confessions and creeds may be attended with circumstances which will be of great and real utility to an unprejudiced enquirer, to judge on which side the truth lies.

But you procede to object, *If confessions are profitable against noxious errors, they should be enlarged as often as new errors of that sort arise.*^a True. But many seemingly new errors are old ones condemned, if not explicitly, yet virtually, in the confessions already established. And many really new ones are not very noxious, or not likely to spread considerably or long. Besides, what *should* be done in cases of this nature, sometimes, for various reasons, *is not, or cannot* be done. And there are circumstances in which attempting to do it would produce more harm than good. Further yet, in circumstances which may appear to be more favorable, great caution and prudence are requisite to avoid going too far: and on whatever account less is done than seems desirable, this by no means proves, that what has been done formerly is useless.

You plead further, *The malignity of some heretics (and perhaps the very existence of others) has been perpetuated by the respectable notice that some*

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^a Ibid.

church or other has thought fit to take of them in an established confession. Now God forbid that any should incur such guilt! But if they will, we cannot omit any part of our duty to prevent it. Serious persons, who erst, we pray God to enlighten and pardon, as we, with pardon for our own errors, and light by which to discern them: nor do we grudge to such the indulgence of a peaceable dissent: but that we should neglect to instruct the people, who want instruction, by doctrines publicly approved, because there are some men so malignant, that they will maintain heretical opinions only because the church hath condemned them, (if indeed there be any such,) is surely a very weak and unchristian expectation. With regard to the attempts of such wretches, (as such you suspect there are, though I could scarcely believe it, and hope you feel no propensity in your own breast that can make it credible to you,) we pray that the word of God may have free course, and be glorified, notwithstanding such endeavours; and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men's evil counsel.

You produce two instances in our own establishment to support your remark, that those heresies, against which none of these provisions have been made, are dead and sunk into utter oblivion; and that those had been perpetuated, of which notice had been taken in an established confession; and these instances are, two of King Edward's articles; his forty-second, censuring the restorers of Origen's opinion concerning the temporary duration of future punishments: and his 40th, against those who maintain that the souls of men deceased do sleep to the day of judgement. Both which articles were dismissed

¹ Confess. p. 67.

² 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

*dismissed in 1562.*¹ But did the maintainers of these errors, while they continued condemned, disturb the church with greater malignancy than before? Nothing like a proof is attempted; but rather the contrary appears, that in ten years time there seemed no occasion of providing any longer against them; to which the condemnation of them had probably contributed. On the other hand, when the provision against those errors ceased, in order to support your remark, we should expect to be informed, that they *sunk into utter oblivion*. No such matter: Rust and Hartley (not to mention Tillotson) wrote in defence of the first, *whose accurate disquisitions we should probably have wanted, you say, had it still been stigmatized with this heretical brand*: and as to the other, you tell us, *if an assent to the 40th article (which condemned it) had still remained a part of our ministerial subscription, something which you call very like a demonstration, that our first reformers were mistaken on this head, had probably never seen the light.*^m I think, sir, your own evidences prove directly against you: and instead of being something *very like a demonstration*, in support of your remark, intirely overthrow it.

Another use of confessions, according to the Remonstrants, is, to obviate calumnies: to prove their usefulness to this purpose, you instance in the case of the Remonstrants themselves, who were charged with concealing some things of which they were ashamed to give their judgement in publick. How, say you, do they obviate this calumny by their confession? How does their publicly confessing some of their doctrines, prove that they concealed none? . . . They admit that they had purposely waved certain thorny and subtle questions, leaving them to the idle

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¹ Confess. p. 66—68.^m Confess. p. 68.

and curious. Might not the doctrines relative to these questions be the very things they were ashamed to confess? The Remonstrants were offended with the horrid decrees, as the authors themselves called them, of absolute predestination and reprobation.^a As this point was what occasioned their opposition, they insisted on having that first discussed in the synod; which when done, they supposed consent in the rest would follow. Now if the Contraremonstrants charged them, on account of their declining to examine the other points previous to that of reprobation, that they concealed some things of which they were ashamed to give their judgement in publick, their publick confession on those points was a vindication of themselves, that they were not ashamed to give their judgement in those things which were before concealed. If they purposely waved thorny and subtle questions, and left them to the idle and curious, it was unreasonable to charge them with concealing opinions which they thought needless and unnecessary, and in examining of which they thought it time lost to trouble themselves or others.^b Such might have calumniated the apostle himself for directing Timothy to *avoid foolish and unlearned questions, knowing that they do gender strifes.*^c And if they took occasion, from the confession of the Remonstrants, to use them ill, they might have taken occasion, from their declining the publication of any, to use them worse. Or if some were more vehement against them after the publication than before

^a Confess. p. 69, 70.

^b Episcopus's speech in Hale's Letters, p. 39.

^c Vide Scripta historica Remonstr. p. 177.

^d Supervacanea et superflua procul habuimus, in non necessariis consistere operæ pretium non judicavimus. Scripta historica, p. 195.

^e 2 Tim. ii. 23.

before, must not some of better dispositions have become less so? They were singularly unhappy. Indeed, if their just vindication of themselves had no weight with any body. Should no persons therefore ever explain themselves, in order to their own defence? or was it imprudent only in the Remonstrants?

There is but one way, you say, of refuting these endless calumnies effectually; by confronting the accusation with matter of fact. The accusation is holding false doctrine. Why is not publishing a confession of the doctrine which they do hold as much a matter of fact, and a more decisive one, than any other?

You say, *The Calvinists charge the Remonstrants with cherishing the worst meanings under scripture words. The Remonstrants say it is a calumny, and appeal to their confession. The same Remonstrants bring the same accusation against another sort of men. May not they too say it is a calumny, and defend themselves in a confession? and at what does all this futile reasoning aim, but at proving that whatever is once got into a confession must be true.* I answer, it aims at no such thing; but only at clearing up what the real doctrine of each of the parties is. And it must be presumed to be what in their confessions they declare it to be, unless the contrary can be shewn: whereas, till this declaration is made, either of them might, according to your own representation of the case, *under scripture words cherish the worst meanings.* I hope, sir, this is no discovery of your and your friends reason for recommending confessions of faith in scripture words, that under cover of those expressions very bad meanings may be conveyed.

You

You think it just and reasonable to give the Remonstrants *their due praise, for their honest regard to the rights of private judgement: but by their limitations and concessions, they leave no more virtue or efficacy to publick confessions than may be reasonably claimed by, and ascribed to, the writings and discourses of any particular divine of judgement and learning.*" They meant to ascribe to them more virtue and efficacy, as the judgement of many, equally capable and unprejudiced, is preferable to that of one.

But notwithstanding all their honest regard to the rights of private judgement, they acknowledged the utility of publick confessions: an offence which you cannot pardon, and therefore cry out, *And yet who knows in what all this moderation and lenity would have ended, had the Remonstrants been fortunate enough to have engaged the civil powers, and with them the majority, on their side?* What would you think of my candor or justice, should I suggest that, notwithstanding your declamations against confessions, you have a formula of your own *in petto*, which you would produce and establish, if the higher powers were favorable to you? But I am willing to give credit to your open declarations against arbitrary impositions, as you must know your own heart, and I cannot. The like justice that I do you, you owe to the Remonstrants; and I should have expected it from you, as you profess to follow very strictly the religion which the writings of the apostles teach, or which may be drawn from them by necessary consequence.* St. Paul describes the charity which he directs us to follow, that it *thinketh no evil*.

* Confess. p. 73.

* Confess. p. 73, 74.

† Confess. note at p. 33.

evil, but hopeth all things.* But indeed you put in your claim to the privilege of drawing consequences for your own use, and, I suppose, of interpreting by your own private judgement; according to which, were I to judge from your treatment of the poor Remonstrants, I must presume you would, like those who explained *statuimus* by *abrogamus*, interpret follow after charity, to mean, shew none at all.

On one occasion, you take notice, they have unwarily dropped this observation: 'There are some things of so great weight and moment, that they cannot be gainstayed without the extreme hazard of our salvation. Freely to contradict these, or quietly to suffer them to be contradicted by others, would be the farthest from prudence and charity possible.' And you go on to ask, What may we suppose would the gentle *Episcopus* have done with the gainstayers of these things, invested, as he might possibly have been, with a commission from the secular arm? I should suppose, (and if your charity goes not so far, it is not my fault,) that the gentle *Episcopus*, and every Christian pastor whom I cannot charge with disobeying the commands of his religion, would endeavour to convert such sinner from the error of his ways, in hopes of saving a soul from death. If he continues obstinately to maintain his heresy, after repeated admonition, I should suppose he would reject him, or endeavour by Christian methods to procure his rejection from the communion of the church. Yet, far from calling on the civil power for the temporal punishment of such a one, every good pastor and good Christian would labor to preserve him from it, as far as could possibly be done consistently with the public

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* 1 Cor. xi. 7.

b James v. 20.

a Confess. p. 74.

c Tit. iii. 10.

lick welfare ; interceding for him with the magistrate, not hypocritically, as the church of Rome doth, but most sincerely ; and taking the utmost care, that if punishment must be inflicted, it might fully appear to be inflicted not on a religious, but civil account. But when this was done, if Episcopius was a minister of the state, to whose office it belonged to execute the laws, gentle as his disposition might be, by nature or grace, Episcopius, I presume, must have obeyed his magistrate ; unless, apprehending the punishment to be unjust, he rather chose to resign his office. But, ill-treated as you acknowledge the Remonstrants were by the Belgic synod, they saw, not the lawfulness only, but the necessity of a confession : for when a body of men are charged with holding false doctrine, how can they vindicate themselves but by a publick declaration of what they do hold, and justifying those doctrines by scripture ; and of what they do *not* hold, by openly renouncing the imputed errors ? But if their professions of moderation are wrested to suspicions of a persecuting spirit, and the confession of some of their doctrines is made an argument of their concealment of them, confessions are useless things indeed ; words have lost their meaning, and it is the duty of judgement to procede *against* evidence. Your uncharitable surmise to the prejudice of the Remonstrants, you are yourself sensible stands in need of an apology. You therefore add,

Let no man say, that, considering the temperate language of the Remonstrants, a surmise of this kind cannot be justified. In this verbal deference for the authority of the scriptures, no church has ever gone further than our own, nor, consequently, lest greater

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*latitude for private judgement.** Much is here wanting before it can have any appearance of an argument or justification of so uncharitable a surmise. Could you even prove (which you have not yet done, nor will be ever able to do) that the church of England, how mild soever she speaks in favor of private judgement, yet, being in power, oppresses all who differ in opinion from her; you cannot from thence justly infer, that the Remonstrants, (though they speak in the same manner,) would, if they had power, oppress those who differ from them; unless by this medium, that *all*, who speak in favor of private judgement, would, if they could get a majority, oppress those who held any different opinions from their own. If you admit this medium, (and you can warrant your surmise by no other,) then let the church of England take heed: for what would the ungentle author of the Confessional do with her, should he be fortunate enough to engage the civil powers, and with them the majority, on his side? However, sir, at present, how willing soever you may be to condemn the church of England as an enemy to private judgement, you have gone no further in your proof of it, than that she publickly professes to assert the right of private judgement; laying down the scriptures as her rule of faith, ‘ by which all ecclesiastical doctrines ought to be tried: no law, no tradition, no custom, is to be received or continued if it be contrary to scripture.’* Other articles, which ‘ are not essentials of faith, she proposes only as a body of safe and pious principles, for the preservation of peace, to be subscribed and not openly contradicted by her sons.’

* Confess. p. 75.

* Jewel's Apology.

sons.' ' Only as a rule, according to which they shall either be admitted, or not admitted, to officiate as publick ministers. And, in perfect agreement with her VIIIth article, you express yourself in the words of M. Le Clerc. *J'avoue que je suis de ceux qui sont pour le Christianisme apostolique, ou pour celui qu'on peut tirer de leur écrits, en propres termes, ou par des conséquences nécessaires, lorsqu'il s'agit d'un dogme essentiel.* To which you subscribe in these words: *And so say I too; reserving to myself, however, the privilege of drawing these necessary consequences for my own use.* The privilege you reserve to yourself, I hope you will think reasonable to allow to the church of England.

But it seems *these concessions of Bp. Bull and Dr. Stebbing are obscure*: . . . *they are hardly sense.* In this case, as in many others before, we are to take your own assertions as sufficient proofs; for you have not vouchsafed to shew either obscurity or nonsense in them: and I cannot but commend your wisdom in not attempting it. You call the making of such concessions by the Remonstrants, *oscillating the question backward and forward*: But perhaps you are here censuring what deserves commendation. If they sometimes recommend a deference to the determinations of learned men exercised in the science which they profess to teach, and at other times insist on the right of judging for ourselves, in opposition to ever so great learning, and fixing at neither point, but changing from time to time between both; these movements are not to be called *oscillations*, but occasional approaches to the one or

¹ Bull's Vindicat. of the Church of England.

² Stebbing's Rational Enquiry.

³ Confess. note at p. 139

⁴ Confess. p. 77.

or the other, according to the attracting power which then surrounds it: and yet they may be as certain a measure of sound judgement in such questions, as the oscillations of a pendulum are allowed to be of time. This method of appointing confessions and articles, and yet allowing them to be freely examined, avoids the extremes of unlimited implicit obedience and of no regard to superiors, and vibrates regularly between authority and private judgement. I wish you would consider a little what sort of vibrations would follow from your method of obliging every teacher to nothing more than a profession of belief in scripture, and a promise to instruct the people from that alone. Suppose he should happen to think like the Quakers, that neither of the two sacraments is prescribed by it; or like the Baptists, that all Christians are to be dipped, and none before years of discretion; what must his parishioners of another opinion do? If he may be turned out for acting upon these opinions, (which seems to be your notion, from what you quote with approbation about Burnet, at pages 79, 80.) would it not have been better to have known beforehand whether he held them? But if no one had a right to know them beforehand, how hath any one a right to punish him for them afterwards? If the people may leave him, and go to another minister, must he hold the living still? or must there be no legal possession of a living, but the people maintain their own ministers during pleasure? Many questions of a similar nature might be asked: and you should let us have a complete view of your scheme, that seeing what you would substitute to govern our motions, in the room of this *oscillation*, which you dislike, we might judge of the practicableness of it.

You

You mention Dr. Stebbing's *Rational Enquiry* on this occasion, and in other places in this chapter: but you pass over such things in it as thoroughly obviate or confute a great part of your arguments and censures; which you have produced again, just as if no notice had ever been taken of them. Is there not something blamable in this conduct? If it proceeds from impetuosity, you ought to confess it with much concern, and moderate it. I will not ascribe it to artful design: for such art would be utterly inconsistent with all common fairness. You call him here *the rigidly ecclesiastical Dr. Stebbing*.^a It would have been no improper instance of candor, if you had acknowledged that this rigid ecclesiastick faith, 'A fault there may be indeed in requiring men to subscribe to more points than are necessary: which, I think, happens when they are required to subscribe to those points, about which (how true soever they may be in themselves) Christians may differ from one another, and yet all of them hold the common faith. And were the meaning of these late complaints only, that something of this sort might be rectified, it had been a matter perhaps not altogether unworthy the consideration of our superiors.'

But I proceed to show some more instances of your disingenuity, and to weigh your objections to our articles: some of which, in your IVth chapter, arise from a particular examination of bishop Burnet's introduction to the exposition of the XXXIX articles of the church of England.

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^a P. 76.

^b P. 55.

In your examination of this exposition you observe, that his lordship *had not scrupled to declare, that the requiring subscription to the thirty-nine articles is a great imposition*, in his history of his own times, folio edition, vol. II. p. 634.^m But did the bishop mean, that no standard of doctrine should be established? or that, if established, the contradictors ought to pass without punishment or censure? Far from it; for in that very paragraph he wishes the thirty-nine articles, * with some corrections, to continue still THE STANDARD OF DOCTRINE; and that those who * teach any contrary tenets should be CENSURED.* He is indeed against subscription, because * churches and societies are much better secured * by laws than by subscriptions.* But why are not both better than one alone? and, of the two, why is not preventing false doctrine preferable to punishing it? Censure *only* would be very insufficient. Those who deserved it would seldom be censured, and with great difficulty. Besides, they would be at liberty to omit preaching whatever doctrine they pleased, and even to confine themselves wholly to natural religion and morality; and thus deists might be preachers: whereas, supposing men honest, when they had declared themselves in favor of Christian doctrines, they would of course, as occasions called for it, preach them all.

This opinion of bishop Burnet, you say, was *not the result of a late experience; for many years before, through the bishop's credit, and the weight of his character, the clergy at Geneva were released from their subscriptions to the Consensus Doctrinae, and only left subject to punishment or censure, in case of writing or preaching against the established doctrine.*

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^m Confess. p. 79. and note.

trine. Bishop Burnet was at Geneva before the revolution, and not afterwards; and from the date of Turretin's oration, mentioned by you at page 145, it is evident that subscription to the *Formula Consensus* at Geneva was not abolished till 1706; and therefore not by means of bishop Burnet's influence twenty years before. And as the author of the bishop's life, who was a very prejudiced person in these matters, mistook in this particular, he might mistake in the whole of what he saith of the bishop's early dislike to subscriptions; and he might have no such dislike when he wrote his exposition. But supposing that he had, why should he not write a book to make men easy in subscribing articles, all of which he declared himself to believe, even in his old age; and which he doth not appear to have thought could have been better expressed, excepting in the matter of original sin and predestination; and which there was then no likelihood of getting changed, even in these two points? If his exposition answered his purpose of making men easy, all was well. If it only made more easy than would have been else, it was better than if they had remained uneasy. And whether fewer or more were uneasy, the subscription was like to continue. Or even had he a prospect that the uneasinesses of any persons, if he did nothing to remove them, might have procured subscription to be laid aside, yet still he wished the articles to continue as a *standard of doctrine*: and on that account an exposition of them was very proper.

You represent the bishop as entering on this task [of expounding the articles] *with no little reluctance*; for *archbishop Tillotson having first moved*

ved him to this work, as he says in his preface, though elsewhere, (in his history of his own times, vol. II. page 228,) he says, ' the queen first moved him ;' *he was determined in it only by the queen's command afterwards.* This you allow us to call a contradiction, if we please : but it is a contradiction, it seems, in which the truth is clearly seen. That great prelate, unable to prevail with his friend Burnet, to undertake an affair of that nature at his own motion, applied to the queen, whose influence, added to his own, left the good bishop no room to decline the service, however disagreeable it might be to him.* Clear as the truth may appear to you in this contradiction, a different truth appears more clearly to me in it, which solves the difficulty ; while you leave it, as you found it, a contradiction still. I mean, that the queen first moved bishop Burnet to explain those articles which seemed to lean intirely to an absolute predestination, in order to clear an objection that had been made, that our articles looked one way, and our doctors went another : that then the archbishop moved him to go on with the rest of the articles ; which was his ground for saying, in his preface, ' I should have kept within the same bounds (of modesty and caution) if I had not been first moved to undertake this work [the exposition of all the articles] by that great prelate who then sat at the helm.' And when the same modesty and caution made him decline it, the archbishop might overcome these by applying to the queen, that her majesty, who first set him to work on some of the articles, would require him to go on with the rest. Wherefore he says, ' And after that, determined in it by a command that was sacred to

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* Confess. p. 81. See Confess. p. 79.

‘ me by respect, as well as by duty.’ So that all the bishop’s reluctance appears to be no other than that common modesty and caution, not to venture on such an undertaking ‘ without a command from those who had authority to give it.’ Pref. p. 1.

But in *this* preface, you say, *the bishop takes particular care to apprize his readers, that his exposition was not a work of authority.* He means, that although he was authorized by the queen and the archbishop of Canterbury to give this exposition, and that it was afterwards approved of by the two archbishops and some bishops in their private capacities, yet the exposition had not been authorized by the convocation and parliament, so as to be enjoined to be publicly received. You and I may, either or both of us, reject it, if we see cause, without publick offence.

What is still more, he there [in his preface] freely declares the slender opinion he had of the effect of such expedients as he had suggested in his introduction. ‘ The settling on some equivocal formularies (says his lordship) will never lay the contention that has arisen concerning the chief points in difference between the Lutherans and the Calvinists.’ You hope, I suppose, by repeating often, to make your reader believe you have proved that bishop Burnet disliked his own exposition, and therefore both wrote and published it unwillingly: whereas there is not the least appearance of any other unwillingness than what arose from diffidence of himself, and apprehension of ill treatment from others. Had he been unwilling on a different account, why should he ever have published it, after the Queen and Tillotson were dead? Your conjecture, that he did it because

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now he could speak his mind in a preface, is a very idle one; for the introduction was not *published* before the preface; he had no necessity therefore to contradict in the one what he said in the other, since they both came out together. Had he thought any thing wrong had been suggested in the introduction, it had been more advisable to have suppressed the wrong suggestion by correcting the introduction, than to publish it and contradict it at the same time. I therefore do not suppose that he meant in his preface to declare any slender opinion he had of the expedients suggested in the introduction; but that what he says in both are consistent with each other: for although he says, ‘Equivocal formularies will never lay the contention that has arisen between the Lutherans and Calvinists,’ Pref. p. vii. this does not contradict the Introduction, where he says, at page 8, ‘Both sides may subscribe our articles with a good conscience, *without any equivocation* :’ not by contentiously urging the article, each against the other, but by harmoniously meeting together in it. ‘For though the first appearance seems to favour the doctrine of absolute decrees, and the irresistibility of grace, yet there are many expressions that have another face.’ If therefore each side would weigh the powerful scriptures which the other has to alledge, and neither would urge the consequences of their opponents doctrine, (which consequences their opponents do not assert;) but would consider the consequences of their own; both might prune something from the extremes of their respective opinions, and the Lutherans might subscribe to a scriptural predestination, and the Calvinists to the conditionate decrees of the gospel: both might

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embrace the unspeakable comfort of God's election, arising to godly persons who feel in themselves the working of the spirit of Christ: both might receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in holy scripture; neither dishonouring his free grace in Christ, by our pretended merits; nor frustrating that will of his which we have expressly declared to us in the word of God, by a secret one which is not reveled, and which therefore we do not and cannot know. The article appears not to have been drawn up to justify either the Lutheran or the Calvinist, but to condemn the extreme opinions of both: not to comprehend both by the art of an *equivocal formula*; but that both sides, by uniting in the same truths, might subscribe with a good conscience, and without any equivocation. Thus preface and introduction agree; nor does the bishop declare in the latter any contemptible opinion he himself had of his own expedients in the former.

You know not what archbishop Tillotson's thoughts of subscriptions were, but say, *Possibly he might think they were unwarrantable impositions, and wish at the bottom to be well rid of them.* Yet your obligations to him had been but slender, if, as you charge him, he intended an equivalent, that should bow our necks to the yoke with a witness. However, in this you misrepresent him, by ridiculously mistaking his words. The proposal you quote from him is, 'We do submit to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the church of England, as it SHALL BE established by law, and promise to teach and practice accordingly.' The archbishop's title to his paper is, 'Concessions, which WILL probably be made' by the church of England. These con-

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cessions were to be established by a future law : ministers were to promise to submit to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the church, as it should be established by that law. The law being not yet made, he uses the expression, *as it shall be established* : but had the law been once made, evidently the promise must have run, *as it is by law established*. Little inaccuracies of expression in a short-hand draught may easily happen : so that interpreting, *as it shall be established*, to mean, *as it shall be at any time hereafter established*, instead of, *as it shall THEN be established*, shews you are are incapable of candor, even towards the mild Tillotson.

With respect to the sense in which the articles are to be subscribed, the compilers of them, and the church, and the state, might intend subscription to be an expression of belief in them, and yet intend no other rule of understanding them to be followed, than that of their grammatical sense. The sense of the compilers, or the majority of them, might not be known easily by every one, even at first, otherwise than by a presumption that the grammatical sense was theirs : much less could it be known easily long after. Their opinion might be known on several points, without knowing how much of that opinion they intended to express in the articles, otherwise than by the words of them : for persons may believe more than they judge *necessary* to be believed. It is to be presumed that they intended their words to have but one grammatical sense : and that sense may be but one, and persons may agree in it ; and yet, going beyond it almost imperceptibly, may differ and dispute about several things relative to the same point, and in their warmth

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• See Confess. p. 85.

may charge one another with differing from the article. But, *undesignedly*, the compilers might use words which had two grammatical senses : and sometimes the subscriber may think them both true : in which case it is much the same as if they had but one. Or if he thinks only one true, that alone will be some presumption that the compilers meant it ; and he cannot often, if ever, be sure that they did not. So that subscription, in the grammatical sense, and in the sense of the compilers, may differ very little, or not at all. Persons must be allowed to subscribe in different senses, if the one true sense be not certain. You say they must subscribe in the sense in which the first subscribers did,* If by the first subscribers you mean the compilers, that point hath been just now considered. If you mean the first after subscription was enjoined by law, we neither know them nor their sense, nor are bound by it.

You think *all the bishop's pains in expounding the articles were absolutely thrown away*, because he complains that *the greater part of the clergy subscribe the articles without ever examining them.* Probably those clergymen, were they to subscribe only the scripture, would do it in the same manner. And if some do it, though they can hardly satisfy their consciences about some things in them, the fault is their own ; and they will ordinarily be more shy of contradicting them than if they had not subscribed them. But neither of these things proves, that *all the bishop's pains in expounding them were absolutely thrown away* : for still his exposition may have been useful to very many, and may be hereafter to more ; besides that what is fitted to be useful, is commendable, whether it proves to be so or not. And evidently much

* See Confess. p. 86.

* Confess. p. 87.

much less doth either of these things prove that subscription is an unwarrantable imposition.

You blame the *trimming* measures, as you call them, of Tillotson and Burnet in matters of religion, and ask, *When were they ever known to succede? and where were they ever known to conciliate the mind of any one of those unreasonable zealots, to whose humor they were accommodated?*

I doubt not but the minds of thousands of zealots have been conciliated by the means of Tillotson and Burnet. And it is evident to every one, except men deeply prejudiced, that the temper of the clergy of this generation is unspeakably milder than of those of the last. What would you wish those two prelates had done? You are displeased at what they did: yet you acknowledge, in the next page, that doing more was impracticable, and some thought attempting it might have endangered the government. And very likely it would, as the friends of the late king were waiting to have this handle given them; and the abolishing episcopacy in Scotland by K. William, in favor of presbytery, would have made the endeavours of those prelates, of reforming the church, if imprudently persisted in, liable to misinterpretation, as if their scheme was to undermine the church of England, and by degrees let in the presbytery. That those bishops could not have been more opposed while they lived, or vilified since they died, if they had vigorously promoted, at all adventures, what you call a reformation, is notoriously false. They would have been much more opposed while they lived; and they are now, and have long been, generally esteemed: your being able to produce only too poor instances to the contrary is a strong proof of it. But what would

would wise and good men have said of them, if by attempting at all hazards, what *they had sense enough to perceive was impracticable*, they had brought back slavery and popery?

Here you honor bishop Burnet with a new note, added in your second edition, in which you call him *a truly wise and good prelate*, after you had been describing him as justifying subscription against his own convictions, and deserting the reformation, *which he was conscious was very much wanted, out of a trimming complaisance to the times*. Had this been intended, in your second edition, as a kind of recantation of the injury you had done him in the first, I should have applauded the ingenuousness of it: but in that case you would have softened your text, as well as added your note. And the note itself will open your design in writing it; not to do justice to bishop Burnet, but to renew your injuries against archbishop Wake, which neither truth, time, nor the friendly admonition of the *learned and worthy person* you mention in your preface, have been able to conquer. To this end you inform us, that bishop Burnet hoped King George I. would *complete the reformation, and establish a confidence and correspondence with the PROTESTANT and REFORMED churches abroad*. One reason of the disappointment of these hopes you give, is, that, soon after, *Dr. William Wake was promoted to the see of Canterbury; and he rather chose to establish a confidence and correspondence with the POPISH GALRICAN church, than with the PROTESTANT REFORMED churches, either at home or abroad.* At the very time that he endeavoured to persuade the *popish Gallican church* to break with the bishop of Rome, and unite with us against popery, (which

surely

^a Confess. note at p. 88.

surely was no crime in a protestant archbishop,) there was an established confidence and correspondence between him and the reformed churches abroad, as appears by his letters to Le Clerc and Jablonski. To the former, (in a letter dated April 1716,) he expresses very warmly his affections for them, his abhorrence of the thought of considering them as no churches, and his desire of their union with the church of England; which he says he would purchase at any rate. . . . That he must be blind who sees not how much this would conduce to the security of our religion, and even to the conversion of the falsely called Catholicks of the Roman church. And at the conclusion of this topick he breaks off in this manner: ' But this, to me, ever delightful subject, of union of the reformed churches among themselves, carries me further than it ought.'^a His letter to the other is dated May 1719. Jablonski had consulted him about treating with the Papists for an union with them; which he dissuades, as they will never yield it but on terms of submission to their tyranny; and says he, ' God banish far from our minds so destructive and so scandalous a wickedness!'^b If you

^a Unionem arctiorem inter omnes Reformatos procurare quovis pretio vellem . . . quantum hoc ad religionis nostrae securitatem conducere; quantum etiam ad pseudo-catholicorum Romanensium conversionem, cæcus sit qui non videat . . . sed abripuit me longius quam par esset, hæc semper mihi dulcis de pace ac unione ecclesiarum reformatarum cogitatio.

^b Hoc tam perniciosum, tam infame facinus, ab animis omnium nostrorum longè avertat Deus! The same Jablonski informs us, as a certain fact, that, from the beginning of the reformation, the church of England had always held a brotherly correspondence with the foreign Protestants. That it was not more effectual, he lays the fault, not

you have any spark of ingenuousness and candor, or love of truth and justice, in your nature, you must blush for your treatment of archbishop Wake: and the reader must be convinced that no love of truth or reformation, but an implacable hatred and malice, has guided your pen in this performance. Mistake calls for charity; malice for abhorrence.

And now begins your examination of the bishop's exposition; in the introduction to which you tell us, that his lordship *rather endeavours to palliate and excuse, than to deny or confute, the impropriety which had been objected to our church, for making such a collection of tracts the standard of her doctrine.* With what truth this is said, be the reader judge. With regard to the enlargements of the creed before the reformation, the bishop says, (Introd. p. 3.) 'This was *absolutely necessary* as to some points:' and he instances in the point of the Divinity of our Saviour, that Christians might not seem to worship a creature. He adds,

P. 4,

not on Dr. Wake, or any English bishops, but on the English Presbyterians; who, to strengthen their own faction, endeavoured to slacken this cord of amity, by representing the *Reformed* in Prussia as holding tenets in opposition to the doctrines of this church. Il est certain, que depuis le commencement de la reformation, l'église Anglicane a toujours entretenu une correspondance fraternelle avec les églises de deçà la mer, comme l'a fait voir entre autres M. de la Mothe, ministre de l'église Française de la Savoie, dans les deux savans traités qu'il a publiés en 1705, et en 1707. — Les Presbyteriens d'Angleterre ont fait leurs efforts pour relâcher ce lien, dans la vue de fortifier leur parti, en repandant que nous étions de leur sentiment par opposition à l'église Anglicane.

Relation des mesures qui furent prises dans les années 1711, 12, 13, pour introduire la liturgie Anglicane dans le royaume de Prusse et dans l'électorat de Hanover, 1767. N°. xii. p. 73.

* Confess. p. 90.

p. 4, that at the reformation, ‘ particular circumstances made it seem to be *more necessary*.’ And he concludes, p. 5, ‘ This may serve in general to *justify* the largeness and particularities of the confession of our faith.’

The bishop says, there was a form, standard, or fixed formulary, settled very early in most churches, to which he refers, under a variety of expressions taken from St. Paul. To which you object, that a *fixed formulary* is not likely to be meant by such a *variety of expressions*. A *fixed formulary*, one would think, should have a *fixed title*. Do you mean this as a *proof*, or even a *presumption*? Is not that first formulary, the *apostles creed*, intitled by a great variety of expression, *creed*, *articles of belief*, *confession*, *symbol*, *rule of faith*? Nay, sir, by this argument I may prove, at least *presume*, that you have not written your book against subscribing to our XXXIX articles of religion, because you call that collection by a variety of expressions, a *creed*, *confession*, *articles*, *human exposition*, a *system*, *peremptory decisions*, a *bridle upon the tongue*, a *shackle upon the pen-hand*, an *office of insurance*. Now, sir, is it, or is it not probable that the same form of words should be described in terms which may denote a hundred different forms?

To enter into a just criticism on these expressions [of St. Paul,] you say, *would be tedious and unnecessary*. I should think it more unnecessary to enter into one that is not just. And if both are unnecessary, why do you enter into any? But you conceive you shall have an advantage by your criticism on some of these expressions, and you are unwilling to part with it; therefore you *proceed*.

Suffice

* Confess. p. 91.

* Confess. p. 92.

Suffice it to observe, after very competent judges, that *τύπος διδασκῆς*, and *ὑποτύπωσις ἐκπλασίτου λόγου*, appear to refer rather to the exemplification of the Christian doctrine in the practice of pious believers, than to any form of words. . . . Without giving this sense to the words, *τύπος διδασκῆς*, Rom. vi. 17. it is absolutely unintelligible. And whatever is the signification of *τύπος* here, must be the meaning of *ὑποτύπωσις*, 2 Tim. i. 13.^f

The words are, *ὑπακούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὅν παρῴδησε τύπος διδασκῆς*. You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were committed : That is, that they had yielded themselves willingly, like ductile matter into the artificer's hands, to be formed or fashioned according to the model to which they had been delivered. This model was not the whole New Testament ; for that was not yet written : and it must, in the very nature of things, be supposed, that the first preachers of the gospel furnished their hearers and converts with brief sketches and outlines of their doctrine, to be afterwards gradually filled up. But you think the words of St. Paul absolutely unintelligible, except they bear this sense : *You have from your heart obeyed that practical exemplification of doctrine which was delivered you.* Surely it would be RATHER more intelligible to understand it of a prescript or rule of doctrine, as Œcumenius does, *εἰς ὅσον καὶ κατέγραψα*. You have obeyed that rule of doctrine.

But you continue to object, *The doctrine is ONE thing, and the type of the doctrine ANOTHER. The doctrine is, and must be, expressed by, and consequently in, some form of words. But the TYPE of that form must be something different from the FORM itself.*^g You seem to forget that the Greek word

τύπος,

^f Ibid.

^g Ibid.

τύπος, or type, is rendered in the English by the word *form*; these words therefore standing for the same thing, your shrewd observation may be thus expressed: 'The doctrine is *one* thing, and the type of the doctrine *another*. The doctrine is, and must be, expressed by, and consequently in, some type of words: but the type of that type (of which the text speaks nothing) must be something different from the type itself.' Really, sir, you have here won me over to your opinion, just before intimated, that your criticism would be something tedious. That the doctrine is *one* thing, and the type of that doctrine *another*, we admit. The doctrine at large, and some of it repeatedly delivered, is contained in the gospel: the type of that doctrine may be either (according to one sense of the word) a summary or abridgement of it; whether such as the evangelists and apostles taught as the rudiments of Christian faith, and afterwards filled up with historical or occasional incidents in the gospels and epistles, or such as the succeeding fathers of the church collected from them: or (according to another sense of the word) the practical exemplification of that doctrine; because the doctrine may be described either in a summary, or in our lives. Such summary, or such lives, are equally types of the doctrine; which word may be applied to either, and the context must determine which is meant.

Unwilling to admit that it ever signifies a summary or abridgement, you refer us in the note to *Grotius and Bengelius's Gnomon upon the place, Rom. vi. 17.* *τύπος, typus, vestigium, figura, exemplar, forma*, Hen. Stephens. Acts xxiii. 25. *τύπος is the literal copy of Lysias's epistle to Felix; not the sum or abridgement of it.* I happen to have both

both the books by me. Grotius says, ' You have obeyed according to the manner (or pattern) which the doctrine of the gospel prescribes: ' referring to Hebr. viii. 5. from Exod. xxv. 40. for the meaning of the word *τύπος*: where *the heavenly things* answers to *the doctrine of the gospel*: the pattern, example, and shadow of those heavenly things to the manner or pattern of the gospel doctrine; and the *obedience* to be formed by it, to the *tabernacle* which Moses was to build according to that pattern. Bengelius refers to the same pattern in the mount. If you mean by quoting H. Stephens, that, among the several interpretations of *τύπος*, it never signifies, a sum or abridgement of any thing, you might find, and probably did find, (only it did not serve your turn to say it,) in that very same lexicon, that it does sometimes signify so: *τύπος ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδιώματος*, Arist. Ethic. i. cap. 3. *ὡς τὸ αἶμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἰσχυρὰ*, Theoph. hist. pl. lib. 4. *τύπος καὶ ἐν ἀποφαισιν λέγομεν*, Aristot. ii. cap. 7. *we represent summarily*. Therefore, though *τύπος* doth signify, in general, a representation, yet it signifies also more particularly, a brief, concise representation or description. And *ὑποτύπωσις* signifies this yet more commonly, as Stephens also shews, and the learned and famous Fabricius more largely and fully, in his first note on the Hypotyposes of Sextus Empiricus. And the verb *ὑποτίθημι* hath the same sense.

You procede in your criticism, and tell us, *the literal English of ὑγιαίνουσιν λόγοι ἔσθ', healing or salutary words*.^a If this were true, it would signify little to the present dispute. But it is utterly false: *ὑγιαίνω* never signifies, to heal or be salutary: it signifies, to be in good health, either in body or mind; as *ὑγιής* signifies, healthy, in either respect.

spect. *ὀρθῶς* is used by St. Paul over and over, concerning sound belief, in opposition to falsehoods and fables; particularly Tit. i. 13.

ii. 2. Heathen authors speak the same language: in Lucian, *περὶ ἀρετῆς*, we find *ὀρθῶς* is joined with *ἀληθῶς*.

And in Plutarch, *de audiend. poet.* if you can bear an expression so near akin to orthodoxy,

ὁρθῶς περὶ θεῶν ὑπολαμβάνειν καὶ ἀληθῶς.

You say, *six formularies would not have been enlarged in any future time.*¹ Could not the words be altered or explained? What then would become of all the translations of the Bible? But forms may be fixed, as most suitable to this time or place, yet others, different in expression, tho' not in substance, may be more suitable to other places at the same time. And they may, in the same place, at different times, be variable, by way of explanation, in opposition to new errors.

*If any other standard is meant [than the scriptures] where is it to be found? . . . If their successors, according to bishop Burnet, 'received these short abstracts from the apostles themselves, with some variations,' you think, the moment you admit of variations. . . . even the use of any formulary, as a standard or test of all doctrines, immediately vanishes away. There must be left, in such varying formularies, room for doubtful and precarious judgements: and the scriptures alone, in all such cases, must be the dernier resort. And if so, why might they not as well have been admitted to decide in the first instance? ** A standard is meant, other than the gospels and epistles, as committed to writing, which is to be found, as to the substance of it, in those books; for the writers of them delivered the same doctrine for substance,

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¹ Ibid.

^{*} Confess. p. 94.

with some variety as to the *form and expression* ; as appears from the same facts related in different modes by the evangelists, and the same doctrines taught in different modes in the epistles. But, notwithstanding this variety, the gospels and epistles are the test of all doctrines. But before any of these were written, there was a *form of doctrine, wholesome and sound words*, which were delivered by the apostles to their converts and disciples. Before any gospel was committed to writing, or when no more than *one* epistle had been sent, St. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to *bold the traditions which had been taught*.¹ These traditions were to the Thessalonians their standard of doctrine ; whether delivered to them by the verbal instructions of Paul, Silas, and Timothy, or by their former epistle, which, some suppose, was the first piece of the New Testament that was written. *Whether by word or our epistle*. According to these traditions in the several churches were the histories of the gospels and the letters of the apostles framed. The necessary points of doctrine were mentioned in these, as the occasion required, and confirmed by historical facts or persuasions, as they, for whose use they were written, made it necessary. The τὰ πεπληροφνημένα, or *things most surely believed*, were the same : the διήγησις, or *order of setting them forth*,^m was left to the genius and style of the writer, and the particular occasions of those they wrote to ; and these therefore *varied*. Now, though we believe, that all necessary points of doctrine, which the TRADITIONS contained, are preserved in these sacred writings ; yet many facts and circumstances are inserted, which, though true, are not so essential and important, as that every one must know and believe

¹ 2 Theff. xi. 15.

^m Luke i. 1.

lieve them. Those essential and important points might be, and we know were, afterwards collected in creeds, the same for substance, though various in form. And as the epistles were written to answer the necessities of the churches to whom they were addressed, and the gospels were written for the respective information of Jews, Gentiles, Romans, and to confute the errors of Ebion and Cerinthus; so the creeds were variously formed for the circumstances of *times* and *places*, and as new heresies arose, explanations were inserted to refute those heresies by the authority of scripture. Amongst the apostolick teachers varying formularies would give no room for doubtful judgements. And afterwards, variation of phrase might make none of sense; or what was added might be evidently right in itself, and seasonable in respect of circumstances, expressing what was all along understood, but needed not till then be explicitly set forth. If any thing was doubted indeed, scripture must be the dernier resort: but it might be useful to propose it in a confession of faith, in order to have it examined by scripture. And further, what it might not be proper to put into a creed, it may be very proper to put into articles, by which clergymen are directed how to instruct others.

Upon his lordship's supposition, that the apostles, or their companions, delivered these formularies of faith as deposits, with such variations as the cases and situations of particular churches demanded, it is next to impossible they should all have perished so absolutely, that no remains of them are to be discovered to this hour.^a Such variations, as the cases of churches required, would of course be made after the time of the apostles, as well as in it, in

^a Confess. p. 95.

their *deposits*. Of these *deposits*, so varied, we have the remains in the several creeds extant in the antient writers. But do you think there was no baptismal creed originally? or if there was one, was it invariable, or variable, in expressions? If the former, your own questions return upon you, What is become of it? If the latter, that is just what we say.

We are told, you say, that these formularies contained a κρύβιον δόγμα, a secret doctrine, seldom, if ever, committed to writing.° A secret doctrine, which is not reveled in the scriptures, is what I know nothing of: doctrines which contain MORE than the whole counsel of God, I have nothing to say to: and additions, which, tho' an angel from heaven was to preach, I am forbid to receive: such I reject: but that part of the gospel revelation was, and may be, relatively bidden, is certain. Our Saviour told his disciples, before his ascension, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.*† And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews distinguishes the first principles of the oracles of God, and laying the foundations, which he compares to milk for babes, and the unskilful in the word of righteousness, from that perfection, which he compares to strong meat belonging to them of full age.‡ After they were sufficiently instructed in the first principles, repentance, faith, remission of sins, the resurrection, and eternal judgement, then a part of what was yet a κρύβιον δόγμα was reveled to them by baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: and afterwards, according to their proficiency, such other parts of it as the teachers thought necessary, till they had declared

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° Confess, p. 96.

† John xvi, 12.

‡ Heb. v. 12, 13, 14. vi. 1.

to them *the whole counsel of God*. In this light the *κεφάλαιον δόγμα* will be no other than the revelation of the gospel delivered to us in the scriptures of the New Testament. These are indeed, as they ought to be, communicated to us, every part of them without exception. But a skilful teacher, in explaining them, will observe that the whole doctrine contained in them is too much to be communicated at once, and much of it improper for ignorant disciples, before the first principles and foundations are laid, and must therefore be opened to them by degrees, with discretion. The lesson at baptism being nearly the same, though not always perhaps exactly so, the substance of it, we may suppose, is come down to us in those short confessions of faith, which at length came to be called Creeds or Symbols. But those who were to be instructors, when commissioned to their office, might be expected to be exercised in lessons of further perfection, that they might be able to teach others.

A casuistical divine, you inform us, is a dealer in cryptics. There is indeed a casuistical professorship at Cambridge: but what are the *cryptics* in which a casuistical divine, by his professorship, is a dealer? If persons put cases to him as their own, he is not to revele, (nor is any divine, nor any layman,) what may hurt them: but he professes no fund of secret principles for the resolution of questions. And whatever your degree of charity may allow you to suspect, that *few people carry their scruples to casuists, but when they suspect the gospel is against them, and hope to be obliged by their casuists with drugs fetched from the hidden wisdom of fathers and schoolmen; yet others know that many come to have cases solved*

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with very upright, and even scrupulous, dispositions, expecting the genuine medicines of the gospel, and not the drugs of schoolmen.

We expect a good account, by what authority these large additions were made, which appear in creeds and confessions of a later date. You have a good account of them in bishop Burnet's Introduction, page 3, where he tells us the enlargements of creeds were at first occasioned by the prevarications of hereticks.

But it seems it is not clear, (to you at least,) that bishop Burnet thought even the imputation of idolatry, occasioned by the worship of the Son, a sufficient reason for adding the words, of the same substance with the Father, to the creeds of the Christian church. Please to look over the third page of his Introduction again. Are not these words there ?

‘ To use more express words . . . was *absolutely necessary* in some points ; for they being obliged to shew, that the Christian religion did not bring in that idolatry which it condemned in heathens, it was also *necessary* to state this matter so, that it should appear that they worshipped *no creature*, but that the person to whom all agreed to pay divine adoration was *truly God* ; and it being found that an equivocation was used in all other words except that of the *same substance*, they judged it *necessary* to fix on it. . . . At all times it is *very necessary* to free the Christian religion from this imputation of idolatry ; but this was never *so necessary*, as when Christianity was engaged in such a struggle with paganism. . . . There was therefore *just reason* given to secure this main point.’ Now, sir, if it is not clear to you that *the honest heart and discerning head of Dr. Burnet* thought there was sufficient

! Confess. p. 100.

! Ibid.

sufficient reason for adding these words, what must we think of your *discerning head*, to which it is not clear; or of your *honest heart*, in saying so if it is clear?

You next examine *the two particular circumstances* at the time of the reformation, to which the bishop says, *it became necessary our reformers should pay a particular regard.* The first was, 'That when the scriptures were first put into mens hands at the reformation, as a rule of faith, many strange conceits were pretended to be derived from them, which gave rise to several impious and extravagant sects. Whence the papists took occasion to calumniate the reformation, as if these sectaries spoke out what all protestants thought.' To which you reply, *The Reformers should have done as the apostles did in the same situation. The apostles were slandered as having taught that men might do evil, that good might come. The doctrine of free grace was the immediate occasion of this calumny. . . . What course did the apostles take in this exigency? Did they frame a new creed or confession? — No; they left the calumny to be confronted by the gospel history, and the tenor of their own writings and conversation, and gave themselves no further trouble about it.* One would think it became the English reformers to wipe off the aspersion undeservedly cast upon them, as if they so asserted free grace as to discharge themselves of all restraints. *But the apostles were so traduced: did they form a new creed or confession? If you mean synodically, I know but of one council, in which they published any general decree: but the publick epistles of them severally to the churches are superior in authority to all the synodical decrees*

of their successors. And St. Paul thought it incumbent on him to deny the charge, and to condemn the slanderers who urged it. *As we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come, whose damnation is just.*" And he added this condemnation of them to those scriptures which are, or ought to be, the foundation of all creeds and confessions, how new soever their forms may be: and he proved the justness of that condemnation, by appealing to their creed at baptism: *Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, (as they had been taught to believe in baptism they were,) live any longer therein?** So much trouble he gave himself about it; and no more than what was equivalent to this did the reformers.

Had the reformers (as you are pleased to direct) held up the Bible, and said, Here is our rule of faith and manners, and by this only we desire to have our doctrine and practice examined; and had they, as the apostles did, acted in conformity to that declaration, they must for ever have silenced every cavil and every slander.† You forget, sir, that holding up the Bible was the occasion of these strange conceits, which were pretended by the several impious and extravagant sects to be derived from it. I will mention two or three, for the honor of private interpretation. *I will pray with the spirit.*‡ Thence they warranted their extempore profusions, and denied the lawfulness of pre-composed forms of prayer; and with some prudenee at the time when the objection was first made, because there was then scarce one of the brethren who had learned

* Rom. iii. 8.

† Confess. p. 104.

‡ Rom. vi. 1, 2.

§ 1 Cor. xiv. 15,

learned to read. Others held up their English Bibles, and proved against infant-baptism^a from this scripture, *Except A MAN be born of water;*^b therefore baptism was not intended for infants or children. Another kept up his excrements for a week, then cast them out into the street, and rolled himself in them, because, *except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*^c They had all things common: from hence the German enthusiasts inferred the community of goods and women. And others inferred that whores are in a more salvable state than honest matrons, because *publicans and harlots shall enter into heaven before the Pharisees.* Holding these and such like extravagant conceits was the crime with which the Protestants, in general, were charged, in consequence of their claim to interpret scripture by their private judgement: how then would they be exculpated by only *holding up the Bible?* Acting in conformity to the Bible, when rightly interpreted, (and otherwise it leads to the utmost confusion and impiety,) is indeed an excellent method to avoid slander; but even then not always an effectual one: Many of the reformers did so, and yet could not escape being involved in the censure which fell upon the impious sects which pretended to reform as well as they. Nay, the apostles themselves, whose example you here recommend, as acting in conformity to the Bible, yet were *slanderosly reported of.* Which the great apostle of the gentiles thought proper to contradict, and condemn the slanderers by a publick instrument.

Jewel's

^a Wall's Infant Baptism, p. 3.

^b John iii. 5.

^c Matth. xviii 3. See Bulling. Hist. Anabapt. p. 53. for this and the following instances.

Jewel's Apology passed a long time for the authentic standard of the church of England's doctrine: but whom did it satisfy or convince? or what peace did it procure for them? ^a They did not expect peace from Papists, from whose tyranny and oppressions they had withdrawn themselves; but to clear themselves from the charge of being Arians, Socinians, or Anabaptists: and this they did so effectually, that the spawn of those hereticks are angry to this day that they have so totally disclaimed them. But it had by no means been sufficient to have said that they desired to have their doctrine and practice examined by the Bible, if they did not declare what their doctrine and practice was. It had been objected, You hold such opinions, and justify such actions. To say, We do not, but we condemn such opinions as errors, and punish such actions as offences, was a good answer. To say only, We believe the Bible, whose authority had been perversely urged in maintenance of both, must have been taken for an evasion. With respect to *Jewel's Apology*, we may answer your question by another, *Whom did it not satisfy, except Papists and sectaries?* Nay, even of those his work might satisfy and convince many; and by the esteem in which it hath always been held, we have reason to think it did, though we may not be able now to name them. If you think no written defence of any opinion doth good, why do you write one? Yet had the church of England been content with *Jewel's* book, or the works of any single man, it would have been said they were no sufficient proof of the doctrine of the CHURCH of England: and if a general declaration had been made only by the men of that age, neither enemies, nor friends

^a Confess. p. 104.

friends would have had sufficient assurance what was the belief of the clergy in following ages. So that the Apology could not *do the work of that more authentick system*, the XXXIX Articles. And after describing this Apology as having done nothing, you gravely tell us, *had the reformers contented themselves with this method of defence, they might have pursued it without any complaint*: from their enemies, you mean; which I readily assent to: and thence infer, that the Apology was no such useless method of defence as you wished us to have made use of, because it provoked that bulky volume of controversy which you mention.

But at length you give the reformers leave to frame apologies and articles too. *The fault you find with them is not for declaring their faith; but setting up these declarations and defences as tests of orthodoxy, and binding them on the consciences of those who had as much right to dissent from them, as they had to dissent from popery.* So that having before permitted the church of England to write apologies, provided they are such as *satisfy and convince nobody*; you now extend your grace, and permit her to believe what she pleases, even that 'the Divine Power, which we call God . . . is distinguished into three equal persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all of the same power, of the same majesty, of the same eternity, of the same Divinity, and of the same substance;' [†] PROVIDED, that she does not require that her people should be taught the same faith which she professes, and will bestow her rewards on those who teach contrary to her doctrine. — But *she binds them on the consciences of those who dissent.* — How so? She found herself enslaved to errors in the church of Rome: these she freed herself

‡ Confess. p. 105.

† Jewel's Apol. cap. 2.

herself from, restoring the faith as she found it generally assented to in the six first centuries. She found, in the rupture with Rome, many impious and extravagant opinions poured in, from which much slander fell upon her: from these she vindicated herself, by declaring her abhorrence of them, and taking care that her disciples should be instructed to avoid them. If any man's conscience is hurt by assenting to the faith of the primitive church in the six first centuries, or in renouncing the tyrannous errors of Rome, or the impieties of extravagant sectaries, what does she do? does she compel them to come in? No: but till it pleases God to enlighten the eyes of their understanding, to discern their errors, she will not commit her disciples to the care of these people. — But *they had as much right to dissent from her, as she had to dissent from popery.* — If a strong persuasion, raised by secular or carnal motives, will not excuse any for mistaking and acting contrary to the gospel, then some at least of the sectaries had no right to dissent from the church of England, while yet she had a right to dissent from popery. Yet suppose the right equal, the present dissenters from the church of England have reason to bless God for her moderation, that they may dissent from her with infinitely less peril than her reformers risked in dissenting from Rome. They would not disturb the society for indifferent things or trifling ceremonies, but they disdained a lie. They patiently endured tortures, and even loss of life, for the sake of truth; while the adversaries of the church of England rage, because she will not bestow her emoluments upon them, and reward them for endeavouring to subvert her.

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The variety of sects amongst the reformers *was a matter of fact, which neither could nor ought to have been denied.*^c It was not : but that their impiety or extravagance was owing to the intolerant spirit of some of the reformers, has no foundation in history, and is a calumny which you venture not openly to avow, though you insidiously recommend the belief of it in the form of a question : and that an appeal to the *actual separation* of them from the church of England was a sufficient answer to those who affected not to be able to distinguish them, is something difficult to understand, when you contend that there should be no *actual separation*, but that all should communicate together, and all teachers be admitted to propagate what doctrines they pleased.

The other circumstance which, according to bishop Burnet, made a copious confession more necessary for the reformed church of England, was, ‘ that concealed Papists being brought to this test, might not creep into the church unawares, and secretly undermine it.’ This may go far towards excusing Cranmer and Ridley for contriving such a test : but the measure was ineffectual ; because many complied who were all the while Papists, and became bloody persecutors in Queen Mary’s days. . . . This therefore will by no means justify Queen Elizabeth’s bishops for continuing such a test. . . . much less the imposers of subscription in all succeeding times.^d King Edward’s mandate to the bishops, to require their clergy to subscribe, was only one month before his death ; so that Queen Elizabeth’s bishops had not sufficient experience of the ineffectualness of this measure to dissuade them from continuing it ; nor does bishop Burnet confess that they had, though you are pleased to affirm it of him : but they

^c Confess. p. 105.

^d Confess. p. 108—110.

they certainly had experience that many Papists refused subscription to our articles in her days ; and if some of them complied with it, what could she have tried with greater likelihood to keep them out, than what was seen actually to keep out multitudes ? And the imposers of subscription in all succeeding times may innocently pursue a method to avoid controversies in the pulpit, and *establish godly concord and consent touching true religion*, where the articles are found agreeable to scripture, or not proved contrary to it ; especially as they find by experience that it keeps out great numbers both of Papists and enthusiastick teachers from claiming our pulpits, and a right to seduce the people.

*Elizabeth . . . thought it right to humor the Papists, and for that purpose made very considerable abatements in those terms of protestant communion [the articles] which were insisted on in Edward's system. Among other things the reviewers of his articles struck out a long passage against the real presence.*¹ It could not be designed by Queen Elizabeth's articles to humor Papists, so many of them being utterly inconsistent with popery. On the whole, there is more in them against popery than in those of Edward VI. I think the only clause against popery in his, that was left out in hers, is that against *the corporal presence* : and instead of it there is put in one, which comes nearly, if not quite, to the same thing in other words. And how an omission to condemn *the real presence* could reconcile Papists, while the reformers still insisted in that very article, that transubstantiation was repugnant to the plain words of scripture, is not very obvious. Bishop Burnet mentions not the Papists in the passage referred to ; but only says, ' The

¹ Confess. p. 110.

' The Queen and her council studied to unite *all*
 ' into the communion of the church. And it
 ' was alledged, that such an express definition a-
 ' gainst a real presence might drive from the
 ' church *many* who were still of that persuasion.'
 Why must these necessarily be the Papists? There
 might be good Protestants in England, who be-
 lieved consubstantiation, as Cranmer did for some
 time after he was a Protestant, and as the Lu-
 therans do still. It might be thought both policy
 and charity to treat them with some indulgence:
 and these should seem *rather* to have been meant,
 as the Papists are expressly condemned in this and
 many other articles. Nay, neither is Dr. Burnet
 so sure that comprehension was the true reason of
 the omission, but that he suggests another; which
 is, that in the beginning of the article the com-
 pilers had gone ' too much upon the principles
 ' of natural philosophy; which, how true so-
 ' ever, might not be the proper subject of an ar-
 ' ticle of religion,'* The bishop therefore is
 only *guessing* at their reason; and, if others might
 guess too, might they not think that the denial of
 ANY *real presence* seemed to clash with the former
 part of the article, where it is said, ' To such as
 ' rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the
 ' same [sacrament,] the bread which we break is
 ' a partaking of the body of Christ.'¹ So that
 the supposed *inconsistencies* in bishop Burnet, which
 you say *are unavoidable, even by the greatest and*
best of men, when they find themselves under a ne-
cessity of defending ecclesiastical institutions only be-
cause they are established, appear to be only a
 dream of your own. There was not the least in-
 consistence between defending our present articles
 on account of the necessity of excluding con-
 cealed

* Burnet's Exposit. p. 308.

¹ Article XXVIII.

cealed Papists out of the church, and relating, or even approving, Queen Elizabeth's reasons for omitting so explicit a determination against the corporal presence, as was in K. Edward's Articles. Concealed Papists (I mean such as any thing could exclude) would be sufficiently excluded by the other articles : and some moderation in this might keep united to the church of England, persons, who, though far from being Papists in other points, or indeed completely so in this, might still believe a real presence. It was reckoned, as bishop Burnet expresses it, ' that if that age could have been on any terms separated from the papacy, though with allowance for many other superstitious conceits, it would once unite them all ; and in the next age they would be so educated, that none of those should any more remain.'^a Which expectations were defeated, not by the articles framed with such moderation, but by the intrigues of popish princes ; by fomenting divisions among us, and counteracting the education to which those articles would have been subservient, by founding seminaries at Doway, Lovain, and St. Omers.

The prudent moderation of the church above-mentioned cannot justly be censured ; for though the practice of becoming *all things to all men, in order to gain some*, may be carried too far, yet it may also be too much neglected.

You tell us in the note,^a *This mutilation of the article concerning the real presence was one of those things which drove the antient Puritans out of the established church.* Why then do you not charge the Puritans here, as you do the bishops elsewhere, with binding things on the consciences of men, or at least wanting to bind them ? Why is not a piece

^a Hist. Ref. vol. II. p. 400.

^a At p. 111.

piece of nonsense about the corporal presence as tolerable as many other opinions? If you would have *no* articles of faith subscribed, why are you so angry at leaving out *one* clause in a subscription, and give so invidious an interpretation of the omission? Why do you not praise the compilers of Elizabeth's articles for leaving out several condemnations which are in those of Edward VI? and where are the very considerable abatements which you say Queen Elizabeth made in the terms of protestant communion, to humor the Papists? Or would you have subscriptions against Papists, and them only? Besides, Burnet does not say this drove the Puritans out of the church, but that it was a thing of which, amongst others, they complained.* And if they did leave it for this, they were so far not driven out, but ran out wildly, without reason.

You inform us, that the *real presence* is one of the circumstances which both popish and protestant writers have brought, to shew the very little difference there is between the churches of Rome and England, and quote Davenport and Heylin.^p But do you not know that Davenport's attempt was shamefully weak and unfair? and that Heylin thought the difference was very great, though not so great as it is? At page 39 of the Introduction you mention, he reckons no less than seventeen points, in which the church of England *totally disagrees with her sister of Rome*. And can you read over the XXXIX Articles, and say the difference is but little? If not, why do you thus disingenuously insinuate it?

However, concerning the extent of that authority by which our articles were established, and subscription to them enjoined, you make no scruple to as-

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firm,

* Hist. Ref. p. 335. note 334.

p P. 111.

firm, that no such authority is vested in the church, and charge it with injoining assent and consent to human creeds and confessions, which appear not to those, of whom such assent and consent are required, to be in perfect agreement with the word of God. We do not injoin assent and consent, nor encroach on private judgement. We have often fully declared and proved that we do not. You therefore ought to consider seriously, whether you act fairly and honestly in accusing us of it; and whether you do not write against your conscience, to indulge your passions, and bring an odium upon the governours of the established church. Your injurious treatment of them, as far as you had power, (of which the reader must have had abundant proof,) will probably incline him to think that they are greater friends to liberty, and the rights of private judgement, than you would be if you had power in your hands. The legislature may enact a national religion, with a toleration of such as dissent from it. This it hath done now; and we are not bound to defend all that was done formerly. And you yourself acknowledge, that it was indeed the business and the duty, both of the civil and ecclesiastical power, to promote Christian edification among the people; for which the word of God hath made sufficient room, without breaking in upon Christian liberty: and if this Christian liberty be abused by absurd and licentious men, so as to endanger the peace, and subvert

^a Confess. p. 1:2.

^r Among many others see, *Church of England vindicated*, 1739, against the *Old Whig*, 1737. Rem. II. p. 19—21. Rem. V. p. 56. X. p. 78, 79. XI. p. 94, 95. XIV. p. 108, 109. et passim. *Stebbing's Rational Enquiry*, 1720, against Bp. Hoadley, p. 35—40. Also *Mr. White's Letter to Mr. S. Chandler*, 1749, p. 51, 57. And, *A full and particular Reply to Mr. Chandler's Case of Subscription*, 1749. Rem. I. p. 7, 9, 13, 21.

the order of civil society, here the civil magistrate has his right of interposing reserved to him by the Gospel itself. May I not here apply some of your own words to you, sir? *These inconsistencies are unavoidable, even by the greatest and best of men, when they find themselves under a disposition to quarrel with the establishment only because they are not intitled to the emoluments of it?* That this indeed is your quarrel, you plainly enough declare: *The state and the church are cordially agreed to continue these articles as standards of orthodoxy, and the SUBSCRIPTION TO THEM AS AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF HOLDING ANY PREFERMENT in the church of England.*

You speak as if you demanded or attempted no more than that men be permitted to believe and worship, peaceably and sincerely, in their own way.* Do you attempt no more? Do you not attempt to deprive the national church of that security for being instructed by ministers of sound faith, which the law gives them? Indeed would you not destroy national churches? Answer ingenuously.

Bishop Burnet's next endeavours are laid out in explaining, 1. the use of the articles; and 2. the importance of the clergy's subscribing them. By the USE of the articles, one would suppose his lordship meant their UTILITY to the church. But — he proceeds to tell us, that, with respect to the laity, they are only articles of church communion. I desire to know what layman is, or ever was, required, either to subscribe or solemnly to declare his assent to them, as a qualification for communion with the church of England.† The bishop no where supposes it; and rejects from church communion

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no

* Confess. p. 115.

† Confess. p. 116.

* Confess. p. 115.

† Confess. p. 117.

‘ no person who does not think that there is some
 ‘ proposition in them [the articles] that is erro-
 ‘ neous to so high a degree, that he cannot hold
 ‘ communion with such as profess it.’* He dis-
 tinguishes betwixt articles of faith, and articles of
 doctrine. The first, as necessary to salvation,
 must be believed; but as you well observe, *not*
because they are contained in the XXXIX Articles,
 but as contained in the creeds, when they solemn-
 ly profess, in the presence of God, I BELIEVE.
 The other, the articles of doctrine ‘ are to her
 ‘ lay sons only a standard of what she teaches;
 with respect to which ‘ the people may continue
 ‘ to join in communion with us, though they
 ‘ may not be fully satisfied with every proposition
 ‘ in them.’ The use of them to the laity is,
 a plan of instruction, drawn up by conference
 of the most learned men then in the nation,
 not one of whom, *singly*, it may be supposed,
 could have drawn up a plan so unexceptionable:
 much less useful would it have been to have in-
 trusted their instruction to the ignorance, whim,
 or craftiness of private teachers, less capable and
 less honest. And if, (as they were fallible men,) any
 error should afterwards be discovered in the
 plan, such errors, when discovered, were to be a-
 mended by their successors.

You apprehend a refusal to subscribe the articles
 in some cases amounts to something equivalent with
 affirming them to be erroneous.^z The vehemence of
 your temper may prompt you to such an imagina-
 tion; but were an ecclesiastical judge to act upon
 it, his superiors would convince him of his mis-
 take. And in the same paragraph you charge,
 either the bishop with having been mistaken in his
 interpretation of the canon, which declares those
 excommunicated

* Introd. p. 6.

y Introd. p. 7.

z Confess. p. 120.

excommunicated who affirm any of the articles to be erroneous; or *the church with a relaxation of discipline, extremely dishonorable to her governours, and highly scandalous to her members.* And why not extremely honorable to her governours, and highly satisfactory to her members? What could be better done, than to let an over-severe canon, made when no set of men sufficiently understood the extent of Christian liberty, fall into desuetude, and thus virtually repeal it? Perhaps indeed this and others, designed *in terrorem*, were never executed. But if they were, ceasing to execute them would, to a man of the least candor, be matter of praise, not reproach. But you conceive that spiritual governours can do nothing right, be they strict, or be they gentle. *But this, you say, is a matter of fact, which proves to a demonstration, that our XXXIX Articles, considered as articles of church-communion, are of no manner of use to the church, or significance to the laity.*^a A standard of doctrine is of use to the church, as a perpetual apology to vindicate her from false aspersions, and a guide to her members: and bishop Burnet hath shewn that they are still of significance to the laity, as they enable them to judge whether we maintain any opinion that should make communion with us unlawful.

You charge Dr. Stebbing as one who hath *attempted to bring the laity under the obligation of assenting to article-doctrine by way of implication.*^b If you mean assenting to all the doctrines of the XXXIX Articles, this is notoriously false. The doctor hath no where made the least attempt of that kind, and certainly would have opposed such an attempt most earnestly. You add, in the note,

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that

^a Ibid.^b Confess. p. 121, and note.

that the doctor *blushes not to say there is the same need of human explications of scripture words with respect to lay communion, that there is with respect to ministerial communion.* And why should he blush to say it? Let those blush who misunderstand or misinterpret him. He doth not say there is need that lay communicants should assent to all the same human explications of scripture words that clergymen do; nor that the need of their assenting to any such is the same in degree and importance; sameness of kind is sufficient. The doctor sufficiently explains himself thus: 'For the holding the faith of the gospel is necessary in both cases; and a general belief that the scriptures are the word of God is no evidence of this in either.' On this you ask, *No evidence of what? I suppose he means, no evidence of communion with any particular church which espouses these human explications.* Now he certainly doth not mean this: and if you will review the passage coolly, you will see he means that a general belief that the scriptures are the word of God is no evidence of a man's holding the faith of the gospel. A presumption it is, and in ordinary cases a sufficient presumption; but not a sufficient evidence in all cases: for a man may believe the Bible, and yet misunderstand it in articles essential to the faith of the gospel. Perhaps you may not blush to deny this; but I hope the affirmers of it are still enough to keep one another in countenance. Nay, I doubt whether you yourself will deny it. The church of England believes the Bible; yet you speak, Pref. p. 1. of a person whose sentiments seem much the same with your own, as *vulnerable in point of his conformity to that church.* At least, you will surely not

not think that all persons who do, or in any age ever did, believe the Bible, let them believe or disbelieve whatever they will else, (consider well how far that reaches,) are and were entitled to Christian communion. And if not, some may have given such ground of suspicion that they are not entitled to it, that there may be need of asking explanations: for professing to believe such and such words of scripture, without declaring in other words how they understand them, gives no more light, in some cases, than professing to believe scripture in general. Such a general profession was not the original one; for there were multitudes of Christians before the New Testament was written: and undoubtedly, after the several books of it were written, multitudes were converted before they knew that such books existed. The apostles gave no directions for substituting at any time this confession of faith in the scripture, instead of the preceding one. There is no trace of its being substituted in any one of the primitive churches; and other confessions have been used down to this day. There are certainly difficulties concerning the doctrine of fundamentals, which vary according to mens various capacities and opportunities: but these difficulties neither warrant the church of Rome in making *every thing* a fundamental which their councils have determined; nor you, nor bishop Hoadley, in making belief of the scriptures *the only one*. There would be difficulties found in these extremes, as well as in the middle way: and single persons and churches must judge for themselves as well as they can, avoiding, with charity and prudence, over-great rigor and over-great latitude; and must bear with one another as far as they can, when their judgements differ.

You interpret bishop Bull, (still in the same note,) as holding, that *the laity are obliged to acknowledge fundamentals, not as they are contained in the XXXIX Articles, (for then they must subscribe assent to those articles,) but as they lie in the scriptures: which, you say, implies, that the church of England thinks this general acknowledgement sufficient evidence of the communion of her lay members with her.* But evidently, acknowledging fundamentals as they are contained in the articles, (unless you mean *because* they are contained in the articles, which is no reason for acknowledging them,) doth not infer assenting to the non-fundamentals that are in the articles. And acknowledging fundamentals because they are contained in scripture, is a very different thing from a general acknowledgement of the truth of scripture: and thinking the former sufficient by no means implies thinking the latter sufficient. And it is notorious that bishop Bull did not think the latter was sufficient.

As to the *importance* of the clergy's subscription, which you proceed next to examine, I suppose you apprehend it is of *some*, by the great pains you have taken in endeavouring to shew that it is of *none*.

The bishop begins this part of the case with observing, that 'the title of the articles bears, that they were agreed upon in convocation, for THE AVOIDING DIVERSITIES OF OPINIONS, AND THE ESTABLISHING OF CONSENT TOUCHING TRUE RELIGION.' Such a consent, you infer, as is absolutely exclusive of ALL diversities of opinions. But the bishop could mean only diversities of opinions about points expressed and decided in the articles, not about others: and such

such consent as is possible and requisite, not such as is impossible and not requisite, to be obtained by this method. Now it may be impossible to prevent one person from subscribing in a different sense from another, because he may understand one or more parts of the articles in a different sense. Whether the supposed sense of the subscriber, or the literal grammatical sense, be taken for the rule, men may differ about either. And such part or parts of the article may be true in the sense of each of these persons, provided neither contradicts the scripture, or reason, or the other part or parts of the article. Still such different interpretations are not likely to be frequent amongst persons of honest minds. And perhaps the differences of opinion, among such persons, that are taken for different interpretations of the articles, are, generally speaking, only different judgements concerning something which lies beyond what the articles have determined: and therefore what they have determined may, for the most part by far, though not always, be subscribed in the same sense by *honest* men; for nothing can bind others: and so they may be, and doubtless are, very useful to ascertain what are the opinions of those who assent to them.

You ask, *what pretence there can be for construing subscription into a simple declaration of the subscriber's opinion, in a certain literal grammatical sense, different from the literal grammatical sense of another subscriber?* I suppose, therefore, that you would have the original sense of the compilers followed. But might it not as well be asked then, what pretence there can be for construing subscription into a declaration of the subscriber's opinion, in a certain original sense, different from
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the original sense of another subscriber? Such things cannot be absolutely prevented in either case; and it may often be impossible to know the intention of the compilers otherwise than from the literal sense of their words, as I have already observed. The compilers might be, and certainly in some things were, of different opinions.² And supposing them men of temper also, they would of course agree to use terms expressing in what they agreed, without determining any thing in matters in which they did not agree: which is a very different thing from using ambiguous terms. But even supposing that in these cases they designedly used ambiguous ones, where they knew that either sense was consistent with Christianity: nay, supposing the terms leaned rather to one sense than another, yet supposing them to know that they might, in their literal and grammatical sense, fairly express either; they might well and wisely take this method, on purpose, to preserve their own Christian liberty, and that of those who should come after them: and favorable suppositions, not unfavorable ones, ought to be made where there is room for them. Still this literal sense must be a natural one, and such as they *might* mean; not an unnatural one, and such as they *could not* mean. And allowing men to subscribe in a literal sense of this kind is neither Jesuitical, nor weak and contemptible casuistry, though it should produce, what it rarely will, subscriptions in different meanings, or, what it scarce ever will, in contrary ones.

You think bishop Burnet's exposition was *contrary to his own sentiments, as appears from a piece he was obliged to publish in his own vindication, while the sheets of his exposition were hardly dry* from

² See Dr. Nichols on the Articles, p. 3.

from the press. The sheets of the exposition must have taken an extraordinary long time to dry, if they were hardly so when the bishop's remarks came out; that piece not being published till the third year after the exposition was printed. Nor was he obliged to publish his remarks in his own vindication from the number of the writers against his exposition, or the general dissatisfaction it gave: for he says, page 1, 'Few books have been written on a better authority than that of a sovereign and a superior: few books have been more strictly examined, and more candidly censured: and . . . few books have been more read, and BETTER RECEIVED: and for a year after there was so general an acquiescing in the book, that it did not then appear that ANY THING was found out to be objected to it.' And at the time when he published his remarks, he speaks as if he knew of only *two* persons who had written against the exposition. And of one of these he says, 'I never yet spoke with any person that thought there was any single passage in it that altered their thoughts of any part of my book: as in the reading it over I did not feel any one part of it that pinched, or that would dispose me to alter any one word in a subsequent edition.' Does it then *plainly appear* from this piece, that the bishop was dissatisfied with his own exposition, and that he wrote it contrary to his own sentiments? or that the general offence given by his exposition was so great, and so immediately pursued it, that he was obliged to publish a vindication of himself, *while the sheets of the exposition were hardly dry from the press?* What the bishop would have thought of such bold censurers and misrepresenters, you may see

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at page 5 of that book, and the reader may judge by the following passage. 'I know there is a sort of people, among whom bold and petulant strains, and scornful and virulent invectives, pass for characters of assurance and victory. But let such writers triumph as much as they please, with their factious herd, men of better tempers and riper judgements have another relish, and are inclined to suspect every thing that is set forth with so little of common decency, not to say Christianity.'

The *enlargement of sense*, which he mentions as giving offence to the Calvinists; and as necessary to justify the Arminian subscription, was not giving a *new* sense to the articles which was never intended by the compilers, but an *opening* of their sense, which Calvinistical expositors had confined; *leaving the articles open*, as he explains himself, *to those of another persuasion*. And such opening was as necessary for himself as for those of the Arminian side; for he says in his preface, 'I think it may be fitting to own, that I follow the doctrine of the Greek church, from which St. Austin departed.'

But if *there was good foundation for this enlargement of sense*, what cause could the good bishop give the Calvinists to complain? The good bishop gave none: but the Calvinists, used to confine the sense, took offence: he does not say, *the Calvinists have cause*, but they may THINK *they have cause given them to complain*. And so thought the Arminians too: but as the Calvinists had long claimed the articles on their side, the bishop might be surprised that those of the Arminian side should

† Burnet's Exposit. pref. p. 6.

* Confess. p. 124.

should quarrel at an enlargement of sense which left the articles open to their persuasion.

The Arminian sense, you peremptorily assert, is certainly not the original sense of the articles: nor is it a sense that they will naturally receive. It is a sense which was never once in the heads of those who compiled them.¹

Neither was the Calvinistical sense the original sense of the articles: they were intended to reject the extreme errors of both sides. That the Arminian sense, so far as it means opinions as published by Arminius, never entered into the compilers heads, is most true, but no great discovery; because Arminius then had published no opinions at all, as he flourished not till the beginning of the 17th century: but if you mean to deny, that the compilers intended to condemn some Calvinistical consequences and excesses, which He also afterwards condemned, then you deny a manifest truth. This appears from the *Reformatio Legum*, where, among the hereticks condemned, are reckoned ‘ such assertors of
‘ predestination and reprobation as charge their
‘ crimes on the will of God, and take no care to
‘ reform their lives, from a persuasion, either
‘ that they are reprobated, and therefore amend-
‘ ment will be useless; or predestinated, and then
‘ it is unnecessary. Wherefore all men are
‘ warned against applying to themselves such
‘ decrees, but that they direct their whole course
‘ of life by God’s laws expressed in scripture.’^m

They likewise condemn those who hold, ‘ that
‘ men

¹ Ibid.

^m Quapropter omnes nobis admonendi sunt, ut in actionibus suscipiendis AD DECRETA PRÆDESTINATIONIS SE NON REFERANT, sed universam vitam suam rationem AD DEI LEGES SE ACCOMMODENT, cum et promissiones bonis et minas malis, in sacris scripturis GENERALITER PROPOSITAS, contemplantur. De hæres. cap. 22.

“ men once justified can never after fall into sin,
 • or that God will not account it for sin in *them*.”
 So far the articles were Arminian, unless you can
 suppose that the same men, in the same year, con-
 demned the same opinions as heresies, and yet re-
 commended them as sound doctrines and necessary
 to be taught the people. With respect to the
 two principle compilers of the articles, Cranmer,
 it is certain, held the *universality* of Christ's re-
 demption, which point strikes at the root of the
 Calvinian system, and, as Dr. Whitby affirms,
 draws all the rest after it, on which side soever the
 truth lies.* The other was so sensible of the dan-
 gerous consequences of both the extremes, fata-
 lism and absolute free-will, that he was afraid to
 express himself otherwise, on that subject, than
 in scripture words.† And Melancthon, when
 Cranmer consulted him on the subject of a gene-
 ral confession, speaking of the doctrine of fata-
 lism, tells the archbishop, “ That the stoical dis-
 • putes on that subject among them at the be-
 • ginning, were too rough, and horrid, and such
 • as were prejudicial to discipline.” We hence
 see the reason of their caution in drawing up that
 difficult article; and yet that they certainly meant
 to condemn the excesses both of Pelagius and of
 Calvin. If the literal and grammatical sense of
 these articles was challenged, both by Lutherans
 and Calvinists, as countenancing some of their
 respective opinions, they were right in so doing;
 for the articles intended to assert what was true
 and

“ Etiam illi de justificatis perversè sentiunt, qui credunt
 illos postquam iusti semel facti sunt, in peccatum non posse
 incidere, aut si forte quicquam eorum faciant quæ Dei le-
 gibus prohibentur, ex Deum pro peccatis non accipere.
 Ibid. cap. 9.

* On the 5 points, p. 566.

† Ridley's Letters.

‡ Strype's Life of Cranmer, p. 409.

and agreeable to scripture in each of their systems: if they had *other* opinions *beside these*, and *different from one another*, they were opinions super-added to the articles, and not maintained in them. And both would agree, if both would be content to assert nothing further than the article warrants.

You next procede to *examine a royal declaration at the head of our articles, which you suppose to make a considerable abatement in the strictness of our subscriptions.* I conceive it makes none at all, but only approves and confirms that which had always been the true intent of subscribing. And the rule laid down in it, being evidently the right one, and the *acquiescing in it* being, as bishop Burnet saith, (Intro. p. 8.) *general*, there was no need of repeating it in subsequent reigns. It seems indeed strange that no date is put to it: but it stands at the head, and is mentioned in the title-page, of the articles reprinted by the King's command, by Bill and Norton, in 4to, 1628, of which a copy is in the archbishop's library at Lambeth. And this probably is the first edition of it, by king Charles at least. For though Wilkins places it in the year 1627, yet it might be drawn up then, and not printed till the year after. Or printers might then, as they do now, put the name of the succeeding year to what comes out of their hands in the latter end of the foregoing. Being therefore probably not designed to be published separtate, the date of the book of articles, to which it was prefixed, might be thought sufficient. And the signature by the King, and the secretary of state, either must be omitted for the same reason, or might not be so constant in those days.

You

You say indeed, that *it is, for ought that any one knows, a spurious declaration.* Yet all along you seem to consider it as a genuine one. And no person would have dared to publish a *spurious* one in this manner. Nor was there need of it: as either of those Kings might easily be induced to make the declaration in question, nor would have born such an invasion of his prerogative. Nor would they, who were dissatisfied with his declaration, have failed to find out, and make known, the truth.

You imagine, that there were two declarations of this kind, somewhat different: which opinion you found on the authority of Dr. Nichols. And the doctor doth indeed speak, p. 3. col. 1. of king James the first's declaration, and col. 2. of the declaration of king Charles, published with the articles, 1630. But his Commentary on the articles is an imperfect work, extending only to article XVI. whereas he had signified his intention to write upon them all. It seems therefore to have been published after his death, and probably from a MS. which had not received his last correction. In col. 1. he quotes bishop Burnet on this subject, and might hastily apprehend the bishop to ascribe this declaration to James I. which he doth not; but only saith, that the occasion for making it rose in the reign of James I. In col. 2. he mistakes the time when king Charles's declaration was published, as I have shewn. And though he ascribes a declaration in col. 1. to the first of these Kings, and in col. 2. to the other, he doth not speak of them as two. But further, he makes Charles the first, in his declaration, quote the right reverend bishop of Chester: a thing extremely improbable; and I believe no-
thing

thing like it was ever known in a royal declaration. And the declaration of Charles I. in 1628 hath no such quotation in it. You think, that King Charles reprinted a declaration made by his father : but would it not have been mentioned in the title-page, as made by his father, and as reprinted ? Perhaps it may be thought that his father's pedantry might lead him to quote the bishop : but his vanity would be as likely to make him rest the whole on his own authority. And if Charles had reprinted his father's declaration, and this quotation had been part of it, would not this part have been reprinted with the rest ? Yet it certainly was not. Where Dr. Nichols found it, I cannot say. Morton was bishop of Chester from 1616 to 1618, and he had written against the papists. There may be in his writings what is here quoted from him : but the form in which the Dr. puts it, *If ——— then may be inferred,* &c. is very unlike the stile of a royal declaration. And I should rather think that his MS. in this place was left inaccurate and obscure, and that his editor had patched it up wrongly, than that there was a declaration with this quotation in it, and another without it. But I agree, sir, with you in wishing that any one, who is able, would further clear up the point.*

L

You

* Prynne, in his *Anti-Arminianism*, p. 4. saith, the articles of queen Elizabeth were ratified by king James in 1604, and by king Charles in 1628. But this declaration could not be published so early as 1604 ; and Prynne mentions no other of king James. Fuller, in his church history, sets down the King's instructions given to Dr. Davenant, and other divines, going to the synod of Dort in 1618, and directions concerning preachers in 1623 ; but different from this declaration, which he no where sets down. But in March 1630, he saith Dr. Davenant was accused of preaching contrary to a declaration of king Charles,

You think, with Dr. Nichols, that the force of this declaration was not designed to extend beyond the time of the king who made it." Now I do not apprehend, that even during his time its force was great enough to make any person understand the meaning of subscription to be different from what he had before, in his own deliberate settled judgement, conceived it to be; (for the supreme governour of our church is fallible;) but only to confirm those in their sentiments who approved subscribing in the grammatical sense, and to settle the wavering. And this authority, or weight, it would naturally have after that king's decease; and the successor, without declaring it, would be taken to approve such subscription,

Charles, lately set forth, which had already produced much peace in the church: and he gives Davenant's defence of himself, by which the declaration now in question appears to be meant; and there is no mention that it was ever published by king James. Heylin, in his life of Laud, under the year 1628, saith, that sufficient notice not having been taken of the King's proclamation about controversies in preaching and writing, June 14, 1626, (mentioned also by Rushworth, vol. i. p. 412) Laud moved his Majesty, that the book of articles might be reprinted, and such a declaration placed before them, as might keep them to their native literal and grammatical sense, which the King ordered should be done. And Heylin inserts it: and saith the Calvinists raised great clamors against it, and framed a petition for revoking it, which was not presented: hence came the vote, or vow, of the House of Commons, dated Jan. 28, 1628-9, of which I shall have occasion soon to say more. No mention of such a declaration of king James occurs. Rushworth hath not inserted this declaration in his book: but in vol. i. p. 653, he saith, that Feb. 4, 1628-9, the House of Commons fell into debate about the King's declaration, and conceived that Laud and Montague had advised him to it. He hath nothing concerning any such declaration by king James. He hath, at p. 64, 65, that King's directions concerning preachers; in which nothing is said about the manner of interpreting the articles.

▪ Confess. p. 125.

subscription, unless he declared the contrary. The successor indeed could not punish any person for acting contrary to this declaration; nor do I know that He could legally, who made it; unless for something that was a fault before it was made. The doctrine, from which the king saith he will not endure any departing in the least degree, is not that of the homilies, as you would represent it: ^w of which homilies the XXXVth article saith only, in general, that they contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for those times; not that there are no mistakes or omissions in them. And the general doctrine of obedience being highly necessary in those and at all times, the compilers of them might think it unnecessary and unsafe to mention the exception of extreme danger to the constitution, though they might think it a just one.

If it is not denied, neither is it granted, *that the literal sense of those, whom you call, Arminians, was different from the true sense.*^{*} Bishop Burnet would have said it was as true a sense as the other: And please to remember that some of those, whom you call Arminians, held the same doctrines before Arminius, or at least without knowing any thing of him, that they did afterwards.

The *quibbling and equivocal terms*, in which you say the declaration is drawn,^y might be tossed, in general, into the heap of severe censures without proof, with which your performance remarkably abounds: but the sources, from which you would derive these terms, failing, the presumption, till the contrary is proved, will be, that there are no such terms to be found in it.

L 2

You

^w Confess. p. 127.^y Confess. p. 129.^{*} Confess. p. 128.

You say they discover the distress of a man in K. James's situation; who, as far as appears, was not the king who published them: and K. Charles, who certainly did publish them, was not in the situation which you say was necessary to produce them.

As to *the vow of the house of commons*,^a if they meant by it to condemn subscribing the articles in the grammatical sense, they have acted very consistently in doing it by a form, which hath no grammatical sense in it.

You seem to object against literal and grammatical interpretation, as introducing *a latitude of senses*.^a Now, sir, I presume you must allow that there may be two senses of a proposition, each of which is *a* true and *an* usual sense, tho' it cannot be said which is *the* true sense. And it may, perhaps, be of small consequence in which of those senses it is subscribed. This is your own doctrine with respect to scripture propositions, and therefore you represent it as a mistake in the first reformers, that *they thought the true sense of scripture could be but one*.^b That because there may be *two*, therefore there may be *two hundred* senses of the same proposition, is an adventurous inference of your own, in which I believe few will agree with you: yet you think it sufficient to subscribe the scripture in *ANY* sense whatever, even of these two hundred, if you or any body else can torture it into so many; why then must the articles *necessarily* be restrained so strictly, when you allow such a latitude to the interpretation of scripture? And what do you think, sir, that very house of commons, who made the remarkable vow abovementioned; what your

^a Confess. p. 130.

^b Chnseff. p. 3.

^a Confess. p. 133.

your dear friends the Puritans, in general, of that, of the former, and of some later times, would have thought of your proposal of subscribing *scripture alone*, and of you for making it?

And thus you shut up your account of the royal declaration, in which you promised to be *as accurate, and at the same time as candid as possible*. As to the author of it, you tell us, you know not whether it was *King James's, or King Charles's, or neither the one or the other's, but spurious*: as to the sense, it is *quibbling and equivocal*. You do not know whether it *has any consistency or common sense in it*: in short, that it is *doing it too much honor to examine the contents of it, or to shew what is really the truth*. And this is the *accurate and candid* account with which you are pleased to put us off. You had made a mistake in page 109 of your first edition, which you have corrected at page 135 in your second: but if Cranmer was for *general expressions*, as it appears he was from the corrected account which you now give of him, then Burnet was in the right in saying, that the articles were composed with temper, even supposing him to mistake in saying, that this proceeded from Melancthon; which is not at all material. Neither will it follow, that because they were more explicit than they need about the *real presence*, they were so about other things. Their words must shew where they were so, and where not.

Your next chapter presents us with
 CHAP. V. *a view of the embarrassed and fluctuating casuistry of those divines who do not approve of, or differ from, bishop Burnet's method*

of justifying subscription to the XXXIX Articles of the church of England.

You endeavour to shew that the articles are *useless*, being designed to prevent diversity of opinions, which they have not done, but rather increased it; and that they are universally *snare to conscience*, because the orthodox themselves are forced to fly to prevarication, as well as the heterodox: whence you infer, that both should equally wish and endeavour to get rid of the embarrassment. The method of your argument, blended, as usual, with personal abuse, shall be attended to after I have previously considered the design of the articles, and the meaning of the compilers in them: which I shall do without respect to any man's plan, but according to the light which the history of those times holds out.

The temporal and spiritual governours of the church of England had observed in the church of Rome some errors with which they could not in conscience comply: but many, who continued to believe and teach according to the church of Rome, continued also to communicate with the church of England, and preach in it; as did also many Arians and Anabaptists, and other innovators; crumbling the church into a multitude of sects, from unwarrantable interpretations of scripture, and disturbing the people with their diversities of opinions. For the avoiding of such diversities of opinions, which must happen if preachers were permitted publickly to maintain and propagate their several opinions, the preachers were to give security to their governours that they would not teach them, but observe 'an uniform profession, doctrine, and preaching:' not for avoiding *all* diversities of opinions absolutely; for doubtless, and indeed you admit it,
many

many points of theology have been, (and may be,) controverted among divines, which are not mentioned in the XXXIX Articles; but 'for the establishment of godly concord IN CERTAIN MATTERS OF RELIGION,' the points then in controversy. In some of these it may be presumed that all the compilers were agreed to guard against 'the dangerous opinions and errors' of Arians, Papists, and Anabaptists. In other points, probably, the first compilers themselves were of different opinions: some might think none but episcopal ordination valid; others might think this too harsh, with respect to those foreign Protestants who *could not* have bishops amongst them, and consequently must have no succession in the ministry, if presbyterian ordination, in such cases of necessity, was not permitted: both agreed against the *self-sent* enthusiasts, who assumed the office without *any* mission. In the church of England none but bishops have publick authority given unto them in the congregation to send ministers; but if any, appointed by publick authority in foreign churches, where bishops were not to be had, come over to us, I see not, by this article, that they were to be re-ordained. Thus both parties came to an agreement in the 23d Article; which no otherwise admitted different opinions than by comprehending them under one general head, in which the different parties agreed.

What then was the design of the compilers in requiring their book of articles to be subscribed? This design is expressed in the preface to K. Edward's articles, to *root out the discord of opinions*. This was their *immediate* design; and as it respects external actions, must mean opinions pub-

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lickly taught, not privately held ; for so long as they were kept private, though contrary to those publicly taught, they could breed no discord : and the effect obtained in some measure points to the end intended : this was, as bishop Burnet observes,^d that ‘ the popish bishops, with the rest ‘ of that party of the inferior clergy, continuing ‘ all that reign [of Edward VI.] to oppose every ‘ thing as long as they might safely do it, yet ‘ complied with every thing when it was once imposed upon them.’ But did not they intend that what was subscribed should be believed ? Certainly they did : there is no doubt but the compilers and imposers, for the better effecting their *immediate design of consent in certain articles of religion*, did remotely intend and hope to win over the dissentients to embrace the truth in those certain articles, or else to restrain them from preaching ; and for this purpose directed the diocesans to confer with those who came for orders or institution ‘ upon every one of those articles,’ and if the clerk consented, ‘ to cause him to subscribe ‘ them ; if not satisfied, to lay the scripture ‘ proofs before him, reasonably and discretely to ‘ move and persuade him,’ and to give him time and space convenient ‘ to deliberate and give his ‘ assent.’^e So that, as bishop Burnet observes justly, ‘ those, who subscribed, did either believe ‘ them [the Articles] to be true, or they did ‘ grossly prevaricate.’^f If the subscription was sincere, the church obtained what she *ultimately* wished for, consent in the truth, as the means to avoid discord of opinion : if the subscription was not sincere, the governours at least obtained their

^d Reflect. on Atterbury's rights, &c. p. 30.

^e Strype's Mem. vol. II. p. 421.

^f Hist. Ref. vol. II. p. 169.

their next and more *immediate* design, that of avoiding discord of opinions in preaching. The prevaricators indeed themselves were criminal: but such men, if they could not be made good, (which their governours endeavoured to do,) were at least tied up from doing mischief: and the scrupulous dissentients ought not to resent it as unreasonable, that they were desired to sit among the hearers, till they should be judged sufficiently instructed *in those certain articles* to be appointed to teach others.

As to the meaning of the compilers in those CERTAIN ARTICLES OF RELIGION, the contrary doctrines to which were intended to be avoided, they judged the articles themselves were sufficient to point it out. Whatever contradicts the doctrines, discipline, or ceremonies there ascertained or enjoined, as agreeable to scripture, or not contrary to it, was to be avoided. Whoever thought the grammatical and literal sense of the articles right, was to teach accordingly: whoever thought it wrong, was not to subscribe them, or teach at all. It is objected, that they are expressed in such terms as to be capable of several literal and grammatical senses, contrary to one another: and then it is asked, Who is to decide which is meant, and which we are to subscribe; or may we subscribe to which we please? I answer, first, that this ought not to be pretended oftener than it is true. It is unfair and dishonest in persons to wrest words into senses visibly foreign from that of the place in question, that they may subscribe articles which in their true meaning they do not believe. In the next place, I answer, that where there is real room for several grammatical senses, none must be taken for the true one which is contrary to reason or scripture;

ture; and of such as contradict neither, that which seems most probable may be taken: but that, on examination, these different senses will be found much less frequent and important than some writers would have them thought to be; and that contrary senses will very seldom occur. We are referred, indeed, to many subscribers, who, as we are told, actually maintain contrary opinions as contained in the articles, which they severally say are agreeable to scripture. For instance, bishop Bull, Drs. Wallis, South, Sherlock, Bennet, &c. it is alledged, are not agreed in the first and second articles, in their doctrine of the *Trinity*: the subscribers at present are supposed to be divided about the third, *Christ's descent into hell*: and the generality now subscribe the seventeenth in an Arminian sense, while some few others subscribe it in a Calvinistical sense, which you think was the original sense of the article. Now, contrarieties may plausibly be charged where none are intended or really exist; and that on several accounts.

First, from the incomprehensibleness of the subject, which we have neither ideas adequate to conceive, nor words proper distinctly and fully to express. *There is one God*: Many who readily and truly subscribe to these words, if called upon to explain their meaning, would probably explain themselves in very *different* manners; which a precision, more malicious than wise and charitable, might call *contrary*. One, for instance, might express himself in scripture language, and say he meant by God, *the LORD sitting upon a throne*; * whose hands have made and fashioned me; ^h whose eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers; ⁱ who loveth righteousness,

* Isaiah vi. 1.

^h Ps. cxix. 73.ⁱ Ps. xxxiv. 15.

ousness, and bateth iniquity.* Another, more metaphysically describes him as a Being of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. Both may mean the same truth, and it would be unjust to charge the former as guilty of the anthropomorphite heresy, when he is as ready as the other to acknowledge that he is *without body, parts, or passions*. Again: one may believe from the scriptures, that *there is one God the Father*;¹ that his Son Jesus Christ is *God blessed for ever, amen*;^m that they who lie to the Holy Ghost, *lie unto God*.ⁿ Another, from the same scriptures, that *there is none other God but one*.^o These may not be contrary to another, if both agree that *in unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: for zeal to assert the unity cannot justly be charged with Socinianism, though some unguarded expressions escape us, unless the Divine Personalities are denied: nor can an equal zeal to assert the Divine Personalities be justly charged with Tritheism, though equally blameable in some expressions, while they expressly maintain the unity of the Godhead. Once more, with respect to the Persons: one, from scripture, which declares Christ to be *the only begotten Son of the Father*,^p may infer his equality of nature, or consubstantiality with the Father: another, from the same scriptures, asserting that *the Father is greater* than the Son, may infer an oeconomic subordination: yet, though these opinions may, in the mode of expression, appear to be *different*, they are not necessarily *contrary*, unless either is so asserted as intentionally to deny the other; because

* Ps. xlv. 7.

^m Rom. ix. 5.

^o 1 Cor. viii. 4.

¹ Ephes. vi. 6.

ⁿ Acts v. 3, 4.

^p John i. 14.

cause both may consist together, a subordination in œconomy, and an equality of nature : and indeed the relation of Father and Son implies both. So also with respect to the procession of the Son and Holy Ghost from the Father, it being asserted that the Son *procedeth forth and came from God,*^a and of the Holy Ghost that he *procedeth from the Father;*^b some may rightly infer from such procession, that, as to their nature or essence, each must be *very and eternal God*; while others, considering the procession with respect to the *προόδουσις ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, the proceeding of each into action, as far as we are concerned, may speak of it as being in time. All these are *different* opinions, liable to be understood as the meaning of the articles, but not *contrary*, while the respective maintainers of each do not deny the rest.

Contrarieties may also be charged, secondly, where a word hath acquired different senses, so as to grow into an equivoque. Thus, in the third article, HELL, or *the invisible state*, when expressed in scripture by the Hebrew שְׁאוֹל, or the Greek ᾠδης, signifies *the unseen place*, the general receptacle of the dead : whether of their bodies or souls is not always distinctly expressed, both being conceived as under ground. The body seems to be most in view, where mention is made of *bringing a man's grey hairs to sheol with sorrow*, Gen. xlii. 38. xlii. 31. or *with blood*, 1 Kings xi. 9. or *going down alive into sheol*, Numb. xvi. 33. or where *the worm* is joined with *sheol*, Job xvii. 13, 14. xxiv. 19, 20. Other passages may be equally understood of either, as Ps. lxxxviii. 1. *My life draweth nigh unto HELL*. Where, however, being explained in
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^a John xvi. 28.^b John xv. 26.

the three following verses by the *pit*, the *grave*, a *place of darkness*, it seems rather to relate to the body. But to which soever it relates, you are greatly mistaken, as Pl. lxxxix. 47. also shews, when you assert, that *the words hell and inferi never signified any thing in the days of the compilers but the place of torment.** Sometimes it evidently signifies that *invisible state* to which the spirit goes when separated from the body, comprehending both a place of rest, and a place of punishment; grounded on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The first is represented in *hell*, being in *torment*; the other comforted in Abraham's bosom. These several states of rest and torment were, in the language in which the New Testament was written, comprehended under the same word *αἰῶς* :

Πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς αἰεὶ προΐαψεν
Ἡρώων. *Iliad A.*

And two different ways to it, that is, to different parts of it, which the good and the bad were to take, are mentioned by Diphilus, in Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 5. pag. 721. Edit. Potter.

Καὶ γὰρ καθ' αἶαν δύο τρίβες νομίζομεν
Μίαν δικαίων, ἑτέραν δ' ἀσεβῶν.

And the way to both parts is called a descent :

———— *Facilis descensus Averni.* *Æn. VI.*

And the Jewish ideas, in the time of the apostles, were agreeable hereto; thus Origen acquaints us that the Jews were instructed in the immortality of the soul, and that *under the earth there were both judgements and rewards* : Καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γῆν δίκαι-
ώματα, καὶ τὰς τιμὰς τῶν καλῶς βεβιωκότων. *Contr. Celſ.*

* Confess. p. 182,

Cels. l. 5. Such being the Jewish opinions, and such the meaning of the word *ᾠδης* in the language in which the evangelist wrote, we may understand St. Luke in this manner: *The rich man in Hades, being in torment, saw Abraham, (in Hades also, but) as far off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* This is confirmed from the opinions of the primitive Christians: Irenæus says, *the souls of Christians go to an invisible place, appointed them by God: Animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum, destinatum eis a Deo.* And Andrew, archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, in his comment on the Revelations, cap. 64, says, *Hell is an unseen, invisible, and unknown place to us, which receiveth our souls when we go hence: "ᾠδης . . . τόπος ἡμῶν ἀειδῆς, ἢ γὰρ ἀφανὴς καὶ ἄγνωστος, ὁ τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν ἐντεῦθεν ἐκδημῶσας δεχόμενος.* They therefore represent the rich man and Lazarus as both in Hades, or, as our translation calls it, *hell*. And although St. Austin says, *he had not yet found where the habitation of the souls of the just is in scripture called HELL,* yet brought into doubt concerning Abraham's bosom, he thinks *it is probable* that there were two hells, divided by the great gulph; in one whereof the souls of the just were at peace, whilst in the other the souls of the wicked were tormented. After his time the western church more generally understood by *inferna*, the place of torments, and by *inferi*, the spirits tormented there. I pass over Calvin's fanciful exposition, that the descent into hell meant Christ's suffering the pains of the damned upon the cross, as it is not supported by scripture, nor will the order of the words of the creed suffer us to believe that the descent

* Lib. V. cap. 26.

* Tom. III. de Genes. ad literam. Lib. 12. c. 129.

* See King on the Creed.

descent into hell was understood to be before Christ's death and burial.

The question is, in which of these senses are we to subscribe, or may all be held without that discord of opinions which the articles were framed to avoid? When this clause was in any creed which had not the mention of the burial, (which is the case of the Athanasian creed,) there was seemingly room to understand it of the burial: and the omission of the descent in other creeds which mention the burial, (which is the case of the Nicene creed,) gave a plausible ground for thinking that the same thing was meant in each by different phrases: but in the apostles creed, which hath both, and in our articles, which adds, *it is ALSO to be believed that he went down into hell*, each must have its distinct meaning; and therefore in the other creeds too, it must be intended, that not only his body was laid in the *grave*, but ALSO that his soul went, during that time, ELSEWHERE: but WHERE? The compilers in Edw. VI.'s time doubtless meant, according to the ideas of the western church in that age, that he went to the place of torments, grounding their opinion upon a passage of St. Peter, to which they refer: but, on the revisal of the articles in 1562, the compilers interpretation of that passage in St. Peter seems to have been doubted; therefore that clause was omitted. Had there been nothing in the article to determine the descent into hell against the sense of burial, that part of the article would have been ambiguous, and might have been understood by two different persons in two meanings quite different, yet not contrary; for both might be true. But, as the sense of burial is excluded, it remains, not ambiguous, but general, expressing only, that our Saviour went into
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the invisible place of departed souls. And three persons may subscribe it in this general sense, and by so doing, in the very same sense, though one of them may think he went only into the place of torment; the second, only into the place of refreshment; and the third, into both. These opinions indeed are contrary; but their contrariety arises, not from what is contained in the article, but in what they add to it. If the first thinks he can prove his opinion, either from St. Peter, or any other way, he may very honestly subscribe, and retain it: but the second may as honestly subscribe, and seems to judge better. The imposers, as they are called, were perhaps some of the one mind, some of the other. But if they were, they plainly did not chuse to express their particular sentiments in the article; but, like wise and good men, left it at large: and so they may very well have done in other cases. Thus,

Thirdly, the contrary opinions, charged on the xviiith article are not contained in it, but are consequences drawn by different men from different parts of it, which the article was not framed to *maintain*, but to *avoid*. The article asserts a *predestination to life, or God's everlasting purpose before the foundations of the world were laid, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation*. And, together with the end, to grant also the means, effectual calling, justification, adoption, sanctification. These doctrines are all agreeable to scripture. But when it is inferred by the fatalist, that this decree is irrelative and absolute, without faith and obedience foreseen, it is a doctrine (whether true or false) *superadded* to the article. Again, if the free-willer say, that the article supposes faith and obedience

obedience foreseen, it is true; but then it does not determine, whether the foreknowledge of faith and obedience were prior to the decree, or consequent to it; whether it were *one occasion* of the decree, or an *effect* of it. If it be urged that the order in which they are mentioned in the article implies that this faith, or working of the spirit, and good works are consequent to the decree, and therefore it cannot be made on a foresight of them; it is sufficient to reply that the *actual* working of the spirit, and the *actual* production of good works, in the elected, being meant, these must be mentioned as consequent to the decree, though the foreknowledge of them were ever so certainly a motive to it; but that the article doth not say, whether it was a motive or not. The orderly process of predestination, after the decree, must be conceived, as the article expresses it, *descendendo*; first the decree, then the calling, obeying the call, justification, adoption, conformity to Christ, and religious walking: but every particular person of the elect must be left to judge of his own election, *ascendendo*; for to him the decree is secret: but from feeling in himself the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying his flesh, having his mind drawn to heaven, and a fervent love of God kindled in his soul, he may thence infer his election in Christ. But to begin with the decree, and to infer, that if it was to life, his own endeavours and good life were unnecessary, and that, live as he will, being predestinated, he shall at length by God's mercy attain everlasting felicity; or if it be to death, that good living is to no purpose, for being reprobated, he shall, notwithstanding any good works, be certainly damned: such fatalism is expressly condemned in the article; and all men are en-

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couraged to good life by attending to God's promises, in such wise as they are generally set forth to us in holy scripture; which require conditions, on our part, of faith and repentance. But of any free-willer from thence infer, that our salvation is absolutely in our own hands, from our own natural powers only, without the aids of grace; such absolute free-will is condemned in the article, which ascribes our salvation to our being chosen in Christ: he is the meritorious cause; to the Spirit working in us; to our obeying through grace; to a justification not due, but free; and to everlasting felicity at length by God's mercy.

If from reading the article it could be doubted whether this were the sense of it or not, amongst the first compilers, let the compilers interpret themselves: *Admonendi sunt omnes, et præsertim illi qui sacras apud populum conciones habent, ne in hoc tam sublimi argumento vel ad dextram vel ad sinistram declinent; id est, ut nec liberum arbitrium ita prædicent, ut gratiam Dei afficiant contumeliâ: nec gratiam sic offerant, ut liberum arbitrium locum non relinquunt.* That the rigors of Calvinism were condemned by this article: appears from many passages in the Institutes of it's leader inconsistent with it: that Arminius was not condemned by it, is certain; not only because he had not then advanced any opinions, but because his opinions were more agreeable to it than Calvin's were. Calvin leads to desperation, by ascribing the damnation of the reprobate to no other cause than the secret counsel of God. *Minimè consensandum est præparationem ad interitum alio transferre quam ad arcanum consilium Dei.* While Arminius ascribes predestination to life to the faithful, not because they

* Instit. Christiani hominis. De libero arbitrio.
Lib. III. cap. 23. N°. I.

they are such from their own merits and natural powers, but from the free grace of God in Christ. *Prædestinatio . . . est decretum beneplaciti Dei in Christo, quo apud se ab æterno statuit fideles . . . vita æterna donare.* — *Fideles autem dicimus, non qui tales propriis meritis aut viribus erant futuri, sed qui Dei beneficio gratuito et peculiari in Christum erant credituri.* So that Calvinism and Pelagianism, though not Arminianism, are intentionally condemned in this article : but all intermediate opinions, how to reconcile God's præscience of a certainty of events with free agency, the unequal vouchsafements of the means of grace, their sufficiency and efficacy, the cooperations of grace and free-will, are left undetermined, to the evidence of scripture, for the exercise of every man's sagacity or faith.

And now, sir, I apply myself to examine your objections in the fifth chapter of the Confessional, which are not answered or obviated in the above account. You begin with wholesale abuse upon all the clergy whose opinions you like not, of whom you speak with contempt, as styling themselves, what they esteem it their honor and happiness to be, *the orthodox*; and who upon your own principles, have as much a right to think for themselves as you have; and therefore have a right to be born with, by the true friends of liberty : but such advocates for liberty, as yourself, tolerate no opinions but their own. And what have these orthodox done ? why *bishop Burnet was never a favorite with them.* If this be a distinguishing character of the *orthodox*, you will have a considerable title to that appellation yourself; for from your frequent gross reflections

more than could be said in M 2100 v. 100 p. 100 on

Opera J. Arminii, disput. XV. p. 283, 284;

Conf. p. 140.

on the bishop, he certainly appears to have been no favorite of yours. *His Pastoral care*, you tell us, *created a sort of offence, which was never to be forgiven.* This charge unhappily wants the circumstance of truth. You know very well that this book is, and hath long, if not always been, highly and generally esteemed, even by those who think the bishop to have carried some things too far. *Such was their resentment,* ^{i. e.} at the *Pastoral Care!* Which resentment appears not. The *Pastoral Care* had been published, I believe, without any mark of resentment, nine years before the convocation meddled with the Exposition: *The lower house fell upon it [the Exposition] with the utmost fury, as a performance full of scandal to the church and danger to religion.* Where you learned that this was done with the utmost fury, you have not informed us. Burnet himself hath only said, that 'they being highly incensed against him,' not for his *Pastoral Care*, but for his opposition to some irregular proceedings of theirs, against which many of the most eminent and learned among them had framed a protest, — 'centured his Exposition in three general propositions: 1. That it allowed a diversity of opinions, which the articles were framed to avoid: 2. that it contained many passages contrary to the true meaning of the articles, and to other received doctrines of our church: 3. that some things in it were of dangerous consequence to the church, and derogated from the honor of the reformation. But what the particulars were to which these general heads referred, could never be learnt.' Now, on two of these heads at least, you have centured the bishop with more fury

^b Confess. p. 140.

^c Ibid.

fury than the lower house of convocation appear to have done: for supposing *their* charge to be true, he might still be an honest man; but *your* charge makes him a knave.

You procede to tell us, that *they were happily restrained from proceeding to extremities in their corporate capacity.*^a . . . Had they then resolved to get him deprived, but were hindered by the interposition of the crown? Let us hear his own account of the matter. 'I begged that the archbishop would dispense with the order made, against further communication with the lower house, as to this matter: but they would enter into no particulars, unless they might at the same time offer some other matters, which the bishops would not admit of.' How could you write in so tragical a stile, on what was plainly no more than a sudden act of unjust peevishness, into which hot-headed seducers hurried the rest, but quickly found they could not support their accusation: and so far were wiser than you have been? And even with respect to the author of the prefatory discourse, bishop Burnet's answer seems to have prevented his designed examination.

The XXXIX Articles were framed to prevent diversities of opinions: and the author of the prefatory discourse, [Dr. Binckes,] undauntedly appeals to the matter of fact in the following words: 'To the honor of the compilers of our Articles, it must be acknowledged, that for the sevenscore years last past, [i. e. from 1562 to 1702.] since the publication of them, they have prevented diversity of opinion in the church, to that degree, that LITTLE or NO dispute hath hitherto been about the different senses the words may, in common and unforced construction,

struction, be made to bear. ~~Without taking~~ *An assertion*
which bids defiance to all history. Without tak-
 ing upon myself the defence of that treatise,
 which I have never seen, I may observe in behalf
 of the articles having obtained the end they pro-
 fessedly aimed at, that the end which they pro-
 fessedly had in view was, TO AVOID DISCORD,
 which then divided the church, IN CERTAIN AR-
 TICLES OF RELIGION; *not to prevent all diver-*
sities of opinions. The end by them specified they
 did in great measure obtain; for the discord of
 papistical, Arian, and anabaptistical errors was cer-
 tainly much more rooted out of the church, from
 the time of compiling the articles to the begin-
 ning of this century, and I hope is so still, than
 it was before the articles passed. This is not
 bidding defiance to all history, but proved by
 it. Neither was it said, that there had been *little*
or no dispute about points determined in the ar-
 ticles; for many bold hereticks would not be re-
 strained: but then they were kept out of the pul-
 pits, and thereby the discord of diversity of o-
 pinions among the people was in a great measure
 avoided, as was intended by the articles. Nor is
 it denied that there were *some* disputes among the
 preachers themselves; for there have been many
 daring transgressors of the laws and oppugners of
 subscription. And the laws of the state may as
 well be reproached for not preventing all riots
 and seditions, as the laws of the church for not
 preventing such factious spirits. But to imagine
 that subscriptions have increased disputes, is much
 wilder than to imagine they have prevented them
 intirely; unless all men were as perverse as you
 are, and then perhaps it might be true,

But

But your *astonishment* at this assertion rose from the sudden recollection of the predestinarian controversy in that interval.^f Surely your astonishment might have subsided much sooner, had you recollected that this was no controversy raised by the articles: it rose long before they were framed, or even Christianity was revealed: it was as old as the dispute about the origin of evil — A controversy which you might also have recollected that you yourself acknowledge, *even if men had been candid, capable, and upright throughout, must probably have arisen at all events.*^g Why must the articles then be deemed useless in *all* respects, because they have not cured a malady, in your own judgement incurable; and which the compilers never dreamed of curing, only attempted to bring men to more moderation, by cautioning against the extreme errors on both sides: in which cautions both sides agreed, and in leaving men, in most of the nice points, to abound in their own sense? Nay, sir, you seem to allow, that notwithstanding such disputes, men might be agreed in the doctrine of the articles; for you say, *it is a fact in which our historical writers of all parties agree, that during the reign of Q. Elizabeth, and for some part of the reign of King James I. there was no difference between the episcopal churchmen and the Puritans, in matters of DOCTRINE.*^h Yet you know that the puritanical interpretation of the III^d and XVIIth Articles was much pressed and opposed in that interval: so that when you reconcile your own assertions to sober truth, I may suppose your astonishment at Dr. Binckes's will subside.

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However,

^f Confess. p. 143.^g Confess. p. 288. 101c.^h Confess. p. 245.

However, you are very angry with Mr. White, that he hath, without the least hesitation, to this fourscore years of peace and rest, added forty-seven more.¹ Where? You state the case with Mr. White thus: Dr. S. Chandler, . . . 1748, had printed the speech of the famous Turretine, spoken to the lesser council of Geneva, June 29, 1706, touching subscription to the Formula Consensus: the effect of which oration was, that all subscriptions to human formularies were thenceforward abolished by publick authority; a promise only being required instead thereof, that the person to be admitted to the function either of minister or professor, would teach nothing, either in the church or academy, contrary to the said Consensus, or the confession of the Gallican church, for the sake of peace. This precedent Dr. Chandler failed not to recommend, as a very proper one for the church of England to follow: which provoked the abovementioned Mr. White to make the following reply: "Because they, [the divines of Geneva,] or most of them, had " swerved from the doctrines which they were called to assent and subscribe to, and were therefore uneasy till their subscriptions were removed, " are we to be called upon to remove ours? We, " who have no such trouble and division amongst " us, upon the point to be assented and subscribed to?" Now, sir, supposing Mr. White mistaken in his assertion, what syllable hath he uttered about forty-seven years of rest and peace added to sevenscore before? Dr. Chandler in 1748 recommended to the church of England to lay aside subscription, as the divines of Geneva had done. To which it was replied, in 1749, that the church of England had not like cause to do it as the divines at Geneva had: *We have no*
SUCH

¹ Confess. p. 144.

SUCH trouble and division amongst us, upon the points to be assented and subscribed to. Here is not a word about the rest and peace enjoyed in England for nine score and seven years : but only that in 1748 and 1749 we had not the same reason to lay aside *our* subscriptions, as the divines at Geneva had in 1706 : and in asserting this certainly Mr. White was not mistaken : for Rector Turretine, in his speech, saith, ‘ Every one acknowledges, that the matters referred to [in the ‘ Geneva subscription] are not sufficiently important, nor clearly enough revealed in scripture, to impose the belief of them.’* ‘ Matters, which persons of all sides avow to be ‘ indifferent, and no ways essential to salvation. . . . , ‘ We meddle nothing with doctrinal matter, nor with our regulations. They ‘ remain in their full force.’^a ‘ They are *bagatelles*,^a such, as it would be in some measure ‘ scandalous to speak to the people about them.’ Yet, ‘ to preserve peace and union, as well as ‘ uniformity, in the manner of our instruction,’ they who offered themselves for the ministry were still to *promise that they would preach nothing contrary to those unessential, unimportant articles, which it was in some measure scandalous to speak to the people about.* Such was the glorious victory over subscriptions at Geneva by Turretine ! such the example recommended to the church of England by Dr. Chandler ! But we have no such opinion of our XXXIX Articles ; *we have no such trouble and division amongst us, upon the points to be assented and subscribed to.* Those points, not fit to be mentioned to the people, were the decisions

* Chandler’s Case of subscription, p. 158.

¹ P. 160.

^a P. 162.

^a P. 175.

• P. 168.

cisions at Dort, which you recommend in preference to ours; and which these divines at Geneva declined requiring subscription to, lest 'all the prelates of the church of England, who do so great honor to the reformed interest, could not be of their church.'

But in good earnest, could Mr. White be ignorant of the trouble which Dr. Clarke and Mr. Whiston met with, for their deviations from the sense of the eighth and some others of our articles? Had he never heard of the controversy concerning Arian subscription? I by no means suppose Mr. White ignorant of these things: but I cannot conceive how it should turn out to the honor of you or your friends to put us in mind of them. It was the design of K. Edward's and Q. Elizabeth's articles to AVOID DISCORD IN CERTAIN MATTERS OF RELIGION: especially, as we learn from the *Reformatio Legum*, against the Arian and Macedonian misinterpretation of scripture, the errors of Pelagians and Anabaptists, and the absurdities and tyranny of popery: and by means of the book of articles, discord in these points was in a great measure avoided in the church, by keeping the maintainers of such heresies and errors out of the pulpits. This good effect, according to Dr. Binckes, as you inform us, the articles in good measure obtained, to the year 1702. At which time Bp. Burnet having restored the articles relating to predestination to their grammatical sense, from the excesses to which Calvinistical interpreters had wrested them, suffering persons of different opinions, in points not absolutely determined in the article, to abound in their own sense: in 1712 the Arians

* Chandler's Case of subscription, p. 169.

* Confess. p. 147.

not only wrested the scriptures in favor of their creature-worship, but the English service, nay, the very Nicene and Athanasian creeds, (though framed on purpose to condemn them), and the several articles relating to the Trinity, to this perverted sense. And at this commodious door entered in all those hereticks whose doctrines had been condemned in general by the Christian church, from the council of Nice to the English synod in 1552. You ask, *Where is their exposition of the articles* [the exposition of the compilers] *relating to the Trinity, to be met with?* If you mean what authority or assurance, besides the words of the articles, is there that they meant to condemn the Arians and Macedonians? I answer, the words are enough; but we have over and above, their express declaration in the Reformatio Legum, tit. De Hæresibus. Speaking of pernicious errors concerning Christ's nature, they say, c. 56. 'Among which some are of the sect of the Arians, so asserting his manhood as to deny his Divinity; who are to be separated as unsound members from the church; as are also those who have conspired with Macedonius against the Holy Ghost, not acknowledging him to be God.' Nay, Turretine, who was for abolishing the Geneva subscription, resents the suspicion of intending thereby to *open the door to Arminianism, Socinianism, or Deism.*"

For

* Confess. p. 184.

† Circa duplicem Christi naturam, perniciosus est et varius error: ex quibus alii sunt ex Arianorum sectâ, Christum ita ponentes hominem, ut Deum negent. Cap. 5. — Quomodo verò hæc putida membra sunt ab ecclesiæ corpore segreganda, quæ de Christo capite tam perversè sentiunt: sic illorum etiam est execrabilis impudentia, qui cum Macedonio contra Spiritum sanctum conspiraverunt, illum pro Deo non agnoscetes. Cap. 6.

* Case of subscription, p. 172.

For although subscription to the decrees of the synod of Dort were abolished, there were confessions of faith sufficient for condemning those errors; and instances in England, that those decrees might be rejected without introducing Arminianism. This was about six years before Dr. Clarke's project was tried. I am unwilling to believe, yet unable to contradict, what common report saith concerning the consequences of Turretine's success at Geneva.

But you say, *opening a door for Arminian subscription unwarily let in the Arians at the same entrance, who would not be turned out. And indeed, if there is prevarication on one side, it cannot be helped; it is the same case on the other.* It still continues to be proved, that what you call Arminianism is a prevarication, or perverting the article to a sense not allowed by the compilers. The prevarication of subscribing Arians is notorious, and by you confessed; for which *our* prevarication, had it been proved, could have been no excuse. After coming into the church in such a blameable manner, to assume the chair, and call your governors to account for setting up these bars against such of your friends as continue honest men and would not treacherously break into a society to plunder it, with whose terms they chuse not to comply, is a behaviour scarce to be paralleled, except by some practices in the first Christian churches settled by the apostles. St. Jude, having exhorted the disciples that they *should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*, speaks of certain men *crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, . . . denying the only Master God and our Lord Jesus Christ.* — *These . . . despised*

despised dominion, and speak evil of dignities: whom he compares to *raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.** Thus much, sir, Mr. White might have known of the controversy concerning Arian subscription. And how much the knowledge turns out to the credit of those who have been concerned in it, the reader will judge; as well as of the justice with which you complain of him for excluding you from the appellation of *we* and *us*, which you think can be only because they offend against canonical conformity: but the articles are criterion sufficient. While you subscribe and controvert, you betray yourself. There needed no canon to convince observers, that all that swim down the stream together, whatever they claimed to be, are not apples. I esteem and pity all serious and candid persons, when I think they err in religious matters: and I hope I am duly sensible of my own fallibility. But such as write without common fairness, mildness, or modesty, ought to have their characters held up to their own view, and that of others. If I have gone too far (as I am very willing to believe I may) in applying to you and your brethren that which the apostle hath above drawn, I beg your pardon with more pleasure than I made the application, and wish to have all due abatements made; but intreat you to consider, how far it fits you.

Mr. White did not think, and I hope had no reason to think, the number of those who had occasion to subscribe the articles, and disbelieved any of them, near so great as you and your friends pretend it. The candid disquisitors would have passed on the world for numerous and considerable and were neither. But were it the case

* Jude, ver. 3, 4, 8, 13.

of ever so many, must we give up every thing to them? Let them shew to what they object; and that we ought to part with it is false; or need not insist on it, though true; when they have convinced us, we will yield. But why must we give up *all* articles, because they dislike *some*, which perhaps we cannot give up? You indeed take a shorter way; that all articles of faith, as such, be they ever so universally acknowledged as true, are unlawful to be proposed for subscription or assent. In which you contradict the judgement of all protestant churches, even those whose judgements you recommend to us to follow, professor Turretine and your friend at Geneva.

In your note at page 147, after informing us that Mr. White had asserted, that every dissenting minister in the kingdom, who had complied with the terms of the toleration, had subscribed the three creeds, you break out into this exclamation, *Good natured soul!* Supposing him ever so greatly mistaken in this assertion, yet what *illnature* could there be in mistaking a fact? Is there none in your exclamation upon it? Do you not mean to insinuate, that Mr. White wished they were obliged more effectually to subscribe the articles? And further, by the words subjoined, that if ecclesiasticks were to take the subscription, this would be done? *Good natured soul!* But can you produce instances to prove, that ecclesiasticks have endeavoured to procure any molestation to dissenting ministers on this general neglect of observing the conditions of the indulgence granted to them? if not, some acknowledgement of their forbearance on this head might be due to them, if any enquiry could be due to ecclesiasticks.

There

There is not any sort of agreement, says a sensible writer, in the notions of these two eminent defenders of the Trinity, Dr. Waterland and Dr. Bennet.^a This sensible writer, who I believe is Dr. Sykes, doth not say truly, that there is no sort of agreement between Waterland and Bennet, and the other persons mentioned in this page. They agreed in a great deal, enough to warrant their subscription, though not in things which the articles do not determine.

To every point of theology, you say, imposed in these articles, I apprehend such agreement was designed;^b yea, so far as it is proposed in these articles, but no further. Had this been attended to, you might have spared the following reflection.

No, saith the doctor, because the thing is impossible.^a What thing does Dr. Nichols say is impossible? not, as you represent him, agreement in every point of theology proposed in the articles: but, as he clearly expresses himself, and as you had just before quoted him, in every point of theology controverted among divines. This is a gross, and must be a willful misrepresentation.

These fathers of the church, you say, might think the thing very possible.^b They knew, as well as you, sir, what was possible and what was not. And when they tell us their design was to avoid diversities of opinions, common sense dictates, that they meant to avoid them as far as by such means they could, and needed. If an act be made to prevent the profanation of the Lord's day, doth it follow that the makers thought it would prevent all profanation of it? Or, if there be some afterwards,

^a Confess. p. 149.

^b Ibid.

^a Confess. p. 150.

^b Ibid.

afterwards, doth it follow that the act is of no use?

The compilers themselves tell us that the design of the articles was to avoid diversities of opinions; Dr. Nichols comes 150 years after them, and affirms this could not be the design of them: which of them is the credible evidence?^c We shall presently see who is the evidence that deserves no credit. The compilers profest design was to avoid diversities of opinions IN CERTAIN MATTERS OF RELIGION; Dr. Nichols says, these articles could not be designed to oblige all persons . . . that they should agree IN EVERY POINT OF THEOLOGY WHICH IS CONTROVERTED AMONG DIVINES. This evidence is consistent and true. The forfeiture of credibility as an evidence I fear will fall to your share in the representation.

The doctor is of opinion, that some of these articles were purposely drawn up in general terms^d [i. e. in terms admitting several senses.] General terms may be terms not admitting several senses, but one general sense in which persons may well agree, though they differ about particulars, not expressed in such general terms.

Some of these articles, —we desire to know which?^e The doctor doth not pretend to be in any secret concerning this matter, nor was he more bound to tell the author of the Confessional, than the author of the Confessional to tell him. Every one must judge uprightly for himself from the words.

Can any one say, that all these persons [the first compilers or subscribers of the articles] were agreed in any one point?^f Why not? They were agreed in all the points which they determined: they

^c Confess. p. 151.

^e Ibid.

^d Ibid.

^f Confess. p. 152.

they were agreed against prayers in an unknown tongue; against transubstantiation; though they might differ about the *presence*: and so in other things, the differences of their systems did not reach to every point.

How many friends helped Cranmer in composing the articles, you do not know, though you say there were only *one or two*: nor whether they were all of a mind, though you assert, that *without all doubt* they were so.^s But if they were, the mild Cranmer, who knew the minds of others to be in several things different from his own, would, so far as he could without betraying important truths, frame the articles so, that persons of such different opinions might subscribe them with a good conscience. Both piety and prudence would engage him to this. So that being framed for persons of different opinions, it is much the same as if they had been framed by such. You proceed to inform us that after they were ratified by the king in council, *They were finally introduced into the convocation, not to receive any synodical authority there, but to be agreed to by subscription. And let mens private opinions be what they would, when they were given to understand, that court favour and church preferment would depend upon their compliance, we may judge in part, from what happens in our own times, that the dissenters would not be the majority: which yet might possibly be the case, as it by no means appears, that the first subscribers were all, or most of them, members of the convocation.*^h For the truth of the facts asserted in this paragraph you refer us to *An historical and critical history on the 39 articles, Introd. p. 2, 3.* The author, I apprehend, was Anthony Collins. Now instead of *only one or two* helping Cranmer

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^s Ibid.^h Ibid. and note.

in composing the articles, he says, they were
 ' agreed upon, and prepared by some bishops,
 ' and other learned and godly men, to be laid
 ' before the convocation : ' and instead of being
 finally introduced into the convocation. . . . to be
 agreed to by subscription, he says, ' that body '
 [the convocation] ' were found to be enemies to
 ' all reformation, and therefore the articles were
 ' not offered to them.' At such variance are
 your proofs from your assertions ! I by no means
 think Collins hath given us a fair and true ac-
 count of this fact ; he was too much biassed, as well
 as yourself : but it is abusing the reader's candor to
 refer him, for proof of what you affirm, to a book
 which directly contradicts you. You say the
 articles were ratified by the king, and finally in-
 troduced into the convocation, not to receive any
 synodical authority there, but to be agreed to by
 subscription : and appeal to Collins. Collins says,
 ' They were not offered to the convocation. Col-
 lins indeed says, the king did by his own au-
 thority require the subscription of the clergy,
 for which he quotes Strype's Memor. Vol. ii.
 p. 420 : and then boldly infers, ' They may be
 truly said to be the king's alone, as having no
 other legal authority but his.' Yet the same
 Strype, in the same volume, p. 368, informs
 us, that ' while the parliament was sitting this
 ' winter (in 1552) a synod also was held, where-
 ' in was framed and concluded a book of ar-
 ' ticles of religion, taken out of the word of God,
 ' purified and reformed from the errors of pope-
 ' ry and other sects : ' but that they were not
 signed or ratified by the king till the next year,
 and by his command published in May, 1553, and
 ' by his authority ordered to be subscribed. So that both
 of

of you are contradicted by the very vouchers to which each of you appeal.

You say, *Dr. Nicholls was imposed upon by Peter Heylin, a man lost to all sense of truth and modesty, whenever the interests or claims of the church came in question.*¹ And doubtless he was biased and warm, to a degree, which, notwithstanding the dreadful provocations that he and his party underwent, was very blameable. But I know not, that he misrepresented things deliberately and wilfully: and even if he had, pray, sir, consider seriously how like this character is to your own; whose temptations to that sin have surely not been quite so great.

Well, say you, but *If the compilers made the matter so easy to men of ALL SORTS OF OPINIONS—* representing this as the sentiment of Dr. Nicholls. Yet, where hath he said it, or any thing like it? but you cannot write fairly.

Dr. Nicholls saith, *men must not wiredraw the articles to unreasonable senses;* you say, *you see not how this is to be helped.*¹ I am sorry to see that you cannot help doing this, wherever you have a temptation to wiredraw any man's words. But there are upright men, and the doctor here exhorts all men to be such.

*He [Dr. Nicholls] thinks the force of K. James's declaration, did not, nor was designed to extend further than his own time.—And that perhaps Bp. Burnet might extend the rule of subscribing (in any literal grammatical sense) he drew from it, too far.*² Bp. Burnet doth not draw his rule of interpreting from the king's declaration but represents men as acquiescing in it, because it appeared a reasonable one.

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¹ Confess. p. 153.² Ibid.³ Ibid.⁴ Confess. p. 154.

In a long passage, quoted at page 155, from Dr. Nicholls, it must be confessed that the doctor hath not expressed himself with the utmost propriety; yet his meaning was plainly to assert that no more particular declaration of belief arises from the phrase *ex animo*, than from the word *willingly*: which is certainly true. A man may *ex animo* subscribe a mere promise, which is no declaration of belief: but where the propositions subscribed comprehend not only a promise, but a declaration of belief, there subscribing them expresses a declaration of belief; and expresses it equally, whether the phrase *ex animo* be used or not. Now the subscription to the articles in the 36th canon comprehends a declaration that the XXXIX Articles are agreeable to the word of God. And Dr. Nicholls never thought of denying this; for you acknowledge that immediately afterwards he says, 'The subscriber ought to assent to each article, taken in a literal and grammatical sense.' But he expressed himself unguardedly; and you take the advantage of it, to misrepresent his opinion, as if he thought consent to the articles signified acquiescence only, and not belief.

Dr. Nicholls, from Grotius, distinguishes the grammatical sense into *original* and *popular*; the latter of which only is to be allowed in the interpretation of any law or writing. On which you observe, it will not THEREFORE follow, that such words or expressions are to be taken in the sense they ARE NOW generally used in, because the popular grammatical sense, in which the words ARE GENERALLY USED NOW, may not be the same popular grammatical sense in which those words were used when the law or writing was made." Careless Dr. Nicholls,

Nicholls, to lay himself thus open to his adversary's thrust! Sharp-sighted Mr. Confessionalist, to discover it! But was it indeed your own discovery? No such matter; for this very Dr. Nicholls had made it ready to your hands, and you yourself had quoted it but ten lines before. 'The expressions must be taken in the plain common sense they *are* generally used in, or were used in at the time of making such law or writing.' You direct the reader to attend to the word *are*, by printing it in Italicks; why did you not with the same attention were given to the words, *or were used in, at the time of making such law or writing*, and print them in Italicks also?—Lest your dissingenuity should be obvious to the most inattentive reader. That there may be two popular grammatical senses of the same expression, both the doctor and you agree; and that the original sense of a word, or such popular sense of it (if it has had two) is not to be taken for the intended one, if it be different from that which was the popular one, when the writing to be assented to was drawn: only let it be observed, that if the word be taken from an older instrument framed when the original, or another popular sense of that word was in use, an ambiguity will arise and if no circumstances will ascertain the sense, such ambiguity must continue.

To Dr. Nicholls saying, that 'there can be no doubt made, but that by *publick authority* (in the XXIII^d article) the compilers meant the authority of the bishops,' you object, *what shall we say of those compilers who PERHAPS, and of those first subscribers who CERTAINLY, were wedded to Calvin's form of church discipline? Can any one say, that they held no opinion diverse from this*

interpretation? Dr. Nicholls plainly means, what is the plain truth, that no ordination of any person, performed *in* this nation, other than by the lawful authority of this nation (which appropriates ordination to bishops) is to be deemed, according to our articles, a lawful appointment *here*. For he saith, that neither by the laws of the church, nor of the realm, any authority is granted to any but bishops to ordain. This must mean *our* own church and realm; of others he saith nothing: nor doth the article. In this article is an instance of a *general* grammatical sense, without different meanings; which two things you are perpetually confounding. Persons may subscribe this article in perfectly the same sense, yet differ in opinion, in whom the authority ought to reside.

You misrepresent 13 Eliz. cap. 12. which doth not say, as you pretend, that *every* clergyman ordained otherwise, than by Edw. the sixth's form, should, on subscribing before Christmas, be qualified to enjoy a benefice: but that *no* clergyman, ordained otherwise, should, without subscribing, be qualified. It is intitled an act for ministers of the church to be of sound religion. Those who were ordained by the form of Edw. the sixth were sufficiently understood to be so: all ordained otherwise, are deprived by this act, unless they subscribe. But which of those, who were otherwise ordained, were qualified to hold benefices, if they did subscribe, the act doth not say. Those who were ordained according to the Popish form, during its being legal, doubtless were. Whether those ordained by foreign protestants, where necessity, not choice, made it impossible to have episcopal ordination, were, this act doth not say. And supposing the first paragraph of 13. Eliz. cap. 12. be understood

understood to indulge such till the Christmas following, upon subscribing, and after that period to refuse them: On this supposition, the rejection being perpetual, and the indulgence only for a short term, the act is rather against the foreign protestant ordination, as not valid in this church.

But you seem to think Cranmer's friendly correspondence which he held with the founders of protestant churches abroad, will prove that he allowed their ordinations to be valid, which yet were not episcopal. He allowed and honored such pastors in their respective districts, where necessity not choice compelled them to be content with such appointments to the ministry. But the allowance was not equal, where episcopal ordination could be had. Even Laud held a friendly correspondence with the foreign protestant churches as well as Cranmer: see his letter in 1639 to the Swiss divines in the *Præstantium virorum Epistole*, Ep. 552. where they are called by him *Confratres mei charissimi*: and of their letter to them he saith, 'it was agreeable to him on a double account, as it was theirs, and exhorting to Christian peace. Such men ought they to be who are members of the same body, and who believe and profess the communion of saints.' And in 1629 he writes to Vossius with great mildness and concern for the whole reformed church, and for peace among divines, in Ep. 471. And he saith to him in 1633, 'It is a mere invention that the English bishops desired to extend
N 4 their

^p Confess. p. 161.

^q Grata certe mihi fuere duplici nomine, scilicet quod vestra, et quod Christianæ pacis suatoria. Tales enim decent ejusdem corporis membra, eosque qui communionem sanctorum et credunt et profitentur.

‘ their jurisdiction over the foreign protestant churches : a thing which they never so much as dreamed of.’ Ep. 528.’ This may serve both to restrain the force of your argument drawn from Cranmer’s friendly correspondence with foreign Protestants, as if it proved that he thought their ordinations as valid in England as the episcopal : and at the same time do some justice to Laud’s character, whom, towards the close of this chapter, you treat with very unjust virulence. He was certainly (as I have observed already, in my remarks on your Preface, page 46.) of a vehement temper, and hurried away by it, and by wrong judgement, and partly by provocation also, into severities, utterly unjustifiable : but he meant to do what was right, when he did otherwise ; and imagined himself cooler than he was. And we ought to make allowances for one another’s faults, and especially warm men for those of warm men, and above all in hot times : and that in which he lived was a fiery time on all sides.

But to return to the XXIII^d Article : you say, *The great founders and supporters of other protestant churches abroad . . . had the misfortune (if it is one) to think there might be a lawful call to the ministry without a prelacy.* Sir, those founders thought it a misfortune that they *could not* have episcopal ordination : but they thought *that necessity* was both an excuse and a law to authorize theirs. Now, where such necessity ceased, the law that authorized them ceased also. In proof of what is here asserted, Luther professes that

* Merum figmentum est episcopos Angliæ jurisdictionem suam in ecclesias vestras velle extendere. Id quidem illis ne per somnium accidit.

* Confess. p. 261.

that if the [popish] bishops would cease to persecute the gospel, . . . ' we would acknowledge ' them as our fathers, and willingly obey their ' authority, *which we find supported by the word of ' God.*' Melancthon lays ' the blame on the ' cruelty of the [popish] bishops, that that canonical polity was destroyed *which, saith he, we so ' earnestly desired to preserve* : and bids the papists ' consider what account they will render to God ' for thus scattering his church.' And Heerbrand, chancellor of Tubingen in Germany, says ' it had been a very salutary thing if every province could have had its bishops, and they their ' Metropolitan.' If we turn our eyes from the Lutherans to the *reformed*, (as they call themselves in distinction from the Lutherans,) we shall find the like favorable judgement, in preference of episcopacy, prevailing among them. Their great leader, Calvin, having acknowledged that bishops were of apostolical institution, adds, that ' arch- ' bishops and patriarchs were afterwards appointed, for the preservation of discipline — That ' the government so ordered was by some called ' an

* Pontifices et episcopi definant evangelium persequi . . . agnoscemus eos tanquam parentes nostros, et parebimus libenter ipsorum auctoritati, *quam verbo Dei videmus communis.* — Luth. Comment. in Hoseam. Vid. Seckendorf. lib. iii. sect. 32. §. cxxvii. p. 584.

* Ita sævitia episcoporum in causâ est, quare alicubi dissolvitur illa canonica politia, *quam nos magnopere cupiebamus conservare.* Ipsi viderint, quomodo rationem Deo reddituri sint, quod dissipant ecclesiam. Apolog. Augustanæ Confess. art. 7. p. 204. The same writer witnesses in a letter to Camerarius. Inter omnes theologos in conventu Smalcaldico, an. 1540, congregatos convenisse, ut episcopis redderetur sua jurisdictio, si piam doctrinam amplecti et manifesta ecclesiæ vitia tollere vellent. Ep. 222. lib. 4.

* Saluberrimum esset, si singulæ provinciæ suos haberent episcopos, et hi archiepiscopum. In compendio theologiæ, p. 730.

* an *hierarchy* : but he thinks improperly ; : :
 * for if we consider the thing itself, and not the
 * name, we shall find those old bishops meant not
 * to frame any plan of governing the church which
 * was different from that which God prescribed
 * in his word.* In his *Necessity for reforming the*
Church, he declares, * Let them give us such an
 * hierarchy, in which bishops may be so above
 * the rest, as they refuse not to be under Christ,
 * and depend upon him as their only Head ; that
 * they maintain a brotherly society, &c. If
 * there be any that do not behave themselves
 * with all reverence and obedience towards them,
 * there is no anathema, but I confess them wor-
 * thy of it.* And in 1549, he, Bullinger,
 and other learned foreign protestants, in a letter
 to K. Edward VI. offered to make him their de-
 fender, and to have bishops in their churches,
 for better unity and concord among them.* And
 when this scheme was disappointed by the in-
 trigues of the court of Rome, he again made a
 serious motion to Parker, after Q. Elizabeth's ac-
 cession, * of uniting Protestants together, by es-
 * tablishing a set form and method, (i. e. says
 * Strype, of publick service and government of
 * the church) not only within her dominions,
 * but also among all the reformed and evangelick
 * churches

* Quod autem singulæ provinciæ unum habebant inter
 episcopos archiepiscopum : quod item in Nicenâ synodo
 constituti sunt patriarchæ, qui essent ordine et dignitate ar-
 chiepiscopis superiores, id ad disciplinæ conservationem per-
 tinebat. — Gubernationem sic constitutam nonnulli hie-
 rarchiam vocarunt, nomine (ut mihi videtur) improprio.
 — Verum si rem, omisso vocabulo, intuemur, reperie-
 mus veteres episcopos non aliam regendæ ecclesiæ formam
 voluisse fingere ab eâ quam Deus verbo suo præscripsit.
 Instit. lib. iv. cap. iv. §. 4.

* Strype's life of Parker, p. 70.

* Life of Cranmer, b. ii. c. 15.

‘ churches abroad.’ The queen ordered her thanks to be returned to Calvin; but while Parker was busied in framing a proper method, Calvin died. In the French church Spanheim witnesses, ‘ Nec obscuri sunt in Galliâ ipsâ reformatâ illi theologi, quorum si votis fuisset locus, nec intercessissent obices removeri nesci, acciperent plerique formam episcopalis disciplinæ. . . . Citareque hanc in rem Casaubonos, Camerones, Diodatos, Bochartos, Langlæos, ac vivos etiam testes, proclive fore.’ Many more may be seen in Durel, from whom I have before quoted one, in my First Letter, page 49, 58. and in *Entretiens sur la Correspondence fraternelle de l’Eglise Anglicane avec les autres Eglises Reformées*, Amst. 1707. Even the synod of Dort, by their president Bogerman, expressed their approbation of the church of England, and of episcopacy, which they were desirous to establish in their churches, but the times would not then permit them to make this change; complaining of their want of it as a misfortune: *Nobis non licet esse tam beatiss.* And Le Clerc, with whom you agree, in your note at page 33, in approving apostolical Christianity, says, he professes his belief to be, that episcopacy is of apostolical institution, and that none have a right to depart from it, unless in cases where the corruptions of the church cannot be remedied without it: and that those, who live in protestant countries where they have bishops, as in England, are greatly to blame ‘ to separate themselves from them; and more so, if they endeavour to overthrow

▪ Life of Parker, p. 69.

▪ Opera Spanh. t. iii. f. 1017.

‘ throw episcopacy in order to introduce presbytery;
 ‘ fanaticism or anarchy.’

Your next attack is upon Dr. Bennet : with his explications of the particular articles, which you mention, I am not concerned, and shall not meddle with them. But I must observe, that when you charge him with giving, in 1714, his young student *to understand that he must subscribe the articles in those very senses in which he explained them, exclusive of all others*; you write with your usual unfairness. He doth no more than lay down his own opinion with his reasons, not arrogating to himself in the text, what you ironically ascribe to him *a peculiarly intimate acquaintance with the sense of the obscurest articles*: and leaves his young student to judge how far he is in the right. You go on to say, that in the very next year, 1715, the doctor affirms, ‘ *the church does not restrain us to the belief of any one article or proposition, in any particular sense, further than we are restrained by the words themselves*. When ‘ *an article or proposition, saith the doctor, is fairly capable of two different senses, I would fain know who hath power to determine which is the church’s*

‘ J’ai toujours fait profession de croire, que le gouvernement épiscopal est d’institution apostolique, et par conséquent très bon et très légitime, qu’on n’a en aucun droit de le changer en aucun lieu, à-moins qu’il ne fut pas possible de reformer autrement les abus qui s’étoient glissés dans le Christianisme, comme on fait qu’il est arrivé en France, dans les Provinces-Unis, en Suisse, et ailleurs, où l’on fût obligé de changer le gouvernement établi, par ce qu’on n’en pouvoit obtenir aucune reformation, que d’ailleurs on a dû le conserver en Angleterre, où la reformation s’est pû faire sans le changer; qu’ainsi les Protestans, qui se trouvent en Angleterre, ou en d’autres lieux, où il y a des évêques, font très mal de s’en separer, que ce seroit encore plus mal fait que de essayer de la détruire pour établir le presbyterianisme, ou le fanatisme, ou l’anarchie. Biblioth. Chois. tom. xx. p. 399.

church's sense?" Benner's Essay ch. 35. On this you remark, - what you must know to be false, that *when the doctor wrote his directions, he thought he himself had this power*; and you imagine he thought so, *upon the supposition*, which if he made, he must be sensible could not warrant him in thinking so, *that the church had left no article or proposition capable of two different senses*. Then you proceed, *if indeed such articles . . . are left ambiguous . . . on set purpose, I do not know who has any power to determine that the church, in such articles and propositions, had any sense at all.*^a The true state of the whole matter is this; when the doctor wrote his *Directions*, he never thought, either that no article was capable of two different senses; or that he had power to determine which of two different senses, of which any article was *fairly capable*, was the church's sense. By *fairly capable* he must mean, comprehending two different senses *agreeable to scripture*; for so the articles themselves and our subscription require them to be. The doctor mentions several articles which have been explained in different senses; he tells us in which of those senses *he* has subscribed, and assigns *his* reasons: but expressly allows those who *can* subscribe in another sense, that is, who think they can prove the words *fairly capable* of another sense *agreeable to scripture*, to subscribe in that sense. And surely, in such a case, the church cannot be said not to have *any* sense because it admits of *two*. So that the doctor's *Directions* and *Essay* agree very well together on this head: as do also the 33d and 35th chapters of his *Essay*. In his 33d indeed he thinks (whether he be mistaken, or not, affects not the argument) no article is *fairly capable* of more than one sense; but,
if

^a Confess. p. 166, 167.

if such there be, in ch. 35. he knows not who has power to determine which is the church's sense.

You adorn you second edition, at page 169, with a very curious note, in which you censure all the judges in England, for determining that the statute of 13. Eliz. requires an absolute subscription to the articles, and not a conditional or limited one, *so far forth as the same were agreeable to the word of God*: and you ask, *where could be the harm or impropriety of allowing protestant ministers to subscribe to human forms with this condition*? I answer, that such a subscription would evidently be unmeaning and trifling; for they might, with the same condition understood, just as well subscribe to a chapter in the Koran, or the decrees of Trent. But you ask, *does the law then require subscription exclusive of this condition? namely, whether these articles are agreeable to the word of God, or not*? Certainly, by no means. But can you see no other sense of this plain proposition *The articles are agreeable to the word of God*, than one of these two, *They are agreeable to it so far as they are agreeable to it, or, They are agreeable to it whether they are agreeable to it or not*? Yet you say that the opinion of the judges *takes it for granted, that the church is infallible*; for if a person conforms without examination, he hath no other way of justifying himself than by the presumption that the church cannot err. But the plain truth is, that no one is required by this act to conform or subscribe without examination, or to conform or subscribe at all. It only appoints, that no one shall enjoy such and such offices unless he subscribes: if he cannot, upon examination, subscribe with a good conscience, he is at full liberty to let it alone. If he can, there is no objection

section against his doing it, be the church in which he officiates ever so fallible. But you cannot forbear speaking of persons as *obliged* to subscribe, though you know the contrary.

You censure Dr. Bennet for saying, *though we subscribe to the 35th article, we do not subscribe to the homilies.** Perhaps the distinction is more subtle than needful. But though we may be supposed to subscribe both, yet certainly we subscribe them to different effect; to the articles, that they are *agreeable to God's word*: to the homilies, that they *contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for those times.* Accordingly, you observe that Dr. Burnet holds, that our subscription to the homilies rather relates to the main importance and design of them, than to every passage in them. On which you make this remark, *It is not improbable that his Lordship had some objection (as well he might) to some passages in the homilies against wilful rebellion.*† I know not what probabilities you may have to think so: but this I know, that Bp. Burnet, after Lord Russell's affair, and the revolution, thought the general doctrine of non-resistance and quiet submission to our governours, taught in those homilies, was *a godly and wholesome doctrine*; for he tells us, in a sermon preached at Guildhall, 1689, that our church enjoins ‘an intire obedience to all the lawful commands of authority, and an absolute submission to that supreme power God hath put in our sovereign's hands. This doctrine, says he, we justly glory in; and if any who have had their baptism and education in our church, have turned renegades from this, they proved no less enemies to the church herself, than to the civil authority.’ But

* Confess. p. 172.

† Confess. p. 173.

But although his lordship *bad* no objection to the homily against *wilful rebellion*, yet you think *he well might*. It is possible, sir, that your ideas of liberty may lead into an illegal and unconstitutional licentiousness; for those celebrated defenders of the people's liberty, the managers for the house of commons against Dr. Sacheverel, allow the doctrine of non-resistance, the doctrine of the church of England, *as stated in her homilies*, or elsewhere delivered; by which the general duty of subjects to the higher power is taught to be UNQUESTIONABLY, A GODLY AND WHOLESOME DOCTRINE.⁵ So that they thought the doctrine not only *necessary for those times*, but also *wholesome at all times*, that men be cautioned against the principal and most usual causes of rebellion, especially ambition and ignorance. By ambition (says the compiler of the homily) I mean the unlawful and restless desire in men, to be of higher estate than God hath given or appointed to them. By ignorance, I mean no unskilfulness in arts and sciences, but the lack of knowledge of God's blessed will declared in his holy word, which teacheth both extremely to abhor all rebellion, as being the root of all mischief: and especially to delight in obedience, as the beginning and foundation of all goodness.⁶

However, you applaud *the late excellent bishop Hoadly*, for his *severe but just reproof of the high-church clergy*, on their approving by their subscriptions the doctrine of the homilies, while yet they differed from it, in the Calvinistical points, and others.¹ At the same time you well know, that *the late excellent Bp. Hoadly* several times made

⁵ Mr. Litchmere's speech, p. 278.

⁶ Fifth part of the Sermon against wilful rebellion.

¹ Confess. p. 176, 177.

made the same subscription to their doctrine that other clergymen do; and yet that perhaps no clergyman of that age differed more from them, both in those points and many besides, than he did. What right then had HE to reprove THEM, or have YOU to extol HIM in this particular? unless you know of some dispensing power that may occasionally be granted to favorites.

Lastly, Dr. Waterland having *ex professo* censured Arian and approved Arminian subscription, hath thereby incurred your high resentment. He professes, you say, *to set out where Dr. Stebbing and Dr. Rogers end; and that they end in confirming our church in her power of requiring subscription to her own sense of holy scripture.*² But they confirm this only in relation to persons who are to be admitted ministers, and they agree very well with one another, and with him.

The first offence you take at the doctor is, his making the intention of the imposers one mean of knowing the sense of the article: to which you object: *By the imposers, I apprehend, must be meant the ministerial imposers, that is, the bishops, they being the persons appointed by law to take the security of a subscription, on behalf of the church.* And then you procede to urge against him the opinion of the author of *The case of subscription to the XXXIX Articles*, that ‘the archbishops and ‘bishops, or even the legislature itself, (without ‘a new declaratory law,) cannot determine what ‘shall be the sense of the doctrines of the articles.’ *In this, say you, the doctor found himself obliged to acquiesce.*¹ I should rather imagine, that by *the imposers* Dr. Waterland could not mean the bishops, as persons appointed by law to take this security of subscription on behalf of the church. 1. Be-

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cause

² Confess. p. 179.

¹ Confess. p. 179, 180.

cause they cannot determine the sense of the articles. 2. Neither are they the imposers, even ministerially; for, according to Watson, (chap. 15.) 'the ordinary (or bishop) is not bound to offer the articles to the clerk, to be by him subscribed, and to require him to do it: but the clerk is himself to offer to subscribe them.' 3. Dr. Waterland explains his own meaning, saying, 'By *imposers* I understand the governours in church and state for the time being.' Case of Arian subscription, p. 11. That is, in 1552, King Edward VI. and the convocation: in 1562, Queen Elizabeth and the convocation: in 1571, Queen Elizabeth, the parliament, and the convocation. 4. Neither do I find that any of the doctor's arguments imply, that, should you, sir, hereafter be made a bishop, and should require subscription from a clerk, that he might subscribe the articles in an Arian sense, because he knew his ministerial imposer interpreted the articles in that sense.

You procede in this mistake, and go on to impose upon the reader, all through your arguments on this point: thus when the doctor said, 'The sense of the compilers and imposers, where certainly known, must be religiously observed;' you say, *the sense of the imposers may be ALWAYS certainly known, whatever the sense of the compilers may be*; and instance in the descent into hell, that the article is now universally understood in a sense probably different from what the compilers of the creed intended.^m Dr. Waterland meant by imposers, the legal ones, the sovereign, parliament, and convocation: you mean the bishops for the time being, who indeed are no imposers at all, not even ministerially; for they do not *impose*, but

^m Confess. p. 181.

but *attest*, the subscription. And the sense of the original compilers must be presumed to be the sense of the imposers, where the contrary does not appear. It does indeed appear in the article of the descent into hell; and it may be inferred, that the original compilers in 1552 interpreted in a more rigid sense the opposition of a man *who of malice and stubbornness of mind doth rail upon the truth of God's word manifestly perceived, and being enemy thereunto persecuteth the same*, than the imposers in 1562 and 1571 did; the compilers supposing such opposition to be *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, and unpardonable, in their XVIth Article; which the imposers under Q. Elizabeth, with more prudence, as well as charity, omitted. But whenever the sense of the compilers and imposers differs, that of the imposers must be taken; for mere compilers, as such, have no authority. Where the sense of the compilers and imposers is the same, it most evidently ought to be followed. And it ought to be presumed that they are the same, unless the contrary appears.

But Dr. Waterland hath happened to say, *except in some very rare and particular cases.*^a The doctor did not mean, that these cases might be excepted at pleasure, without any ground for it, but on good evidence. You ask, how any persons *came by this authority*? The answer is, from the nature and reason of the thing. You ask also why such liberty *may not be taken upon equally good grounds, in cases neither rare nor particular*? The answer is, because there are not equally good grounds to make these exceptions in many cases as to make them in a few: and the reason of making them in any, is not that the cases are rare

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and

^a Confess. p. 182.

and particular, but that they carry their own proof along with them, that they ought to be made.

Dr. Waterland says truly, that *the sense of the articles relating to the Trinity is fixed by the plain signification of the words, and the known intent of the compilers and imposers.* And you may put it to the conscience of any honest man, whether it is not by all these ways so expressed as to be utterly inconsistent with the Arian and Socinian schemes. But he says as truly, concerning the damnatory clauses, that the compilers sense of them being doubtful, and the imposers not having explained them, they may be understood in such sense as the words will bear, and as is most agreeable to scripture and reason. Now, in all opinions, on which a sentence of condemnation is passed, the case of invincible ignorance, and penitence, is always tacitly, though not expressly, excepted; and our Saviour's own words, *He that believeth not shall be damned*, authorize the exception. No one understanding them to relate to such as have not had sufficient means of belief: for, *How*, saith St. Paul, *shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?*

It is an unfair advantage that you would take from the wrong sense which you have given to the word *imposers*, that you thence assert, *the meaning of the imposers may* ALWAYS be known. With respect to *legal* imposers this is utterly false, all of them having been long since dead, without leaving other marks of their meaning behind them, than such as arise from the usual sense of the words: and with respect to the bishop or ordinary, the knowledge of his meaning is no proof of the meaning of the imposers.

Speaking

Speaking of the compiler of the Athanasian creed, you say, *It is reasonable to suppose that a warm dogmatical man, heated by opposition, who was presumptuous enough to lay down points of artificial theology as articles of faith, without any support from scripture, might have the assurance to consign all men to damnation, who did not believe his doctrines; having probably no other way to procure them to be received.* But, being sensible from what Dr. Waterland had said, that it was not rational to suppose, that the composer of that creed was so presumptuous, or that consigning men to damnation was the way to procure the belief of doctrines which were not believed before, you only answer, *Be it so:* which is giving up your assertion at the same time that you let it stand.

You say, in opposition to Dr. Waterland, that if *Arminians and Calvinists both subscribe the XVIIth article, and each in his own sense, they must give it two inconsistent and contradictory senses.* But, indeed, their sense of that article may be just the same, though their opinion concerning the subject of the article may, in respect of matters not expressed in the article, be very different: and it is not expressed in the article, whether predestination be conditional or unconditional. And therefore Dr. Waterland hath justly observed, that both may subscribe to the same proposition in the same sense, though they differ in particulars relating to it, but not contained in it; which is not differing, AT LEAST IT NEED NOT BE, about the sense of the article. The words, which you have put in capitals to raise the attention of your readers, well deserve your own, as they contain the

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solution

• Confess. p. 185.

• Confess. p. 186.

• Confess. p. 189.

solution of your objection: for your assertion, that the Calvinist hath no idea of predestination which is not *absolute*, is evidently a false one; though he thinks the *divine* predestination is absolute.

You say, indeed, that *no stronger word can be devised for the state of a man consigned to an inevitable lot, exclusive of all conditions, than predestination.* But indeed *predestination* doth not exclude conditions, unless the word *unconditional*, or one of like import, be added to it. You say further, that *divine decrees controulable by contingent conditions* (you should have said, *dependent on such conditions*) *are contradictory, and differ nothing from human decrees.* But evidently, they differ as much as divine and human do: and as men often make conditional decrees, without the least contradiction or absurdity, surely God may.

You affirm, that according to Dr. Waterland's scheme of subscribing articles in the same sense, *he and the Arians subscribed in the same general sense.* It were to be wished you had specified in plain terms what that general sense is; for the small attempt, which you have made toward it in the following page, is to me absolutely unintelligible.

You do not allow that there is any criterion by which it appears that the Arians were more intended to be condemned by the articles on the Trinity, than the Arminians, or *conditionate decrees*, by the XVIIth.* But the *Reformatio Legum*, as already observed, determines that the Arians, who denied Christ in his better nature to be God eternal and equal with the Father, were

to

* P. 192.

† P. 191.

• Ibid.

• Confess. p. 188—192.

to be separated from the church as unsound members : and that men should frame their lives according to God's laws in scripture, where promises are made to the good, and threatenings to the wicked ; and to rest in that will of God which we see reveled in scripture. Not denying the unchangeable decrees of predestination, but certainly not condemning those who believe the conditionate decrees of God's reveled will. So no door is fraudulently opened to those, whom you call Arminians, to the office of preaching, which the articles have not invited them to enter at : no door is attempted to be shut against the Arians, which the articles did not designedly bar against them.

You conclude this point with the following words, which I wish you well to weigh : *The truth of the case is, just as the bishop of Bristol (Dr. Coneybeare) hath stated it, in his noted sermon on subscription :* ' Every one who subscribes the articles of religion, does thereby engage, not only not to dispute or contradict them ; but his subscription amounts to an approbation of, and assent to, the truth of the doctrines therein contained, in the very sense (in) which the compilers [and imposers] are supposed to have understood them.' I have added [*and imposers,*] because it is certain that the imposers in 1562, and 1571, have not bound upon the subscriber some doctrines, of which the compilers in 1552 were persuaded.

Foreseeing that it might be objected, that this fixing and obtruding her own interpretations of scripture upon her sons, is rather more than a protestant church ought to pretend to, they have prepared an answer, as you tell us : Here, say they, is no in-

O 4

quisition,

quisition, no compulsion, in the case. The church of England compels no man to subscribe: they may let it alone if they please. And is not this answer a true one? The church of England obtrudes her interpretation of scripture on no one: to give her own interpretation of it, in opposition to what she judges error, is the very essence of protestantism, and what every protestant church hath done. So far is it from being more than they can pretend to, that they would not be Protestants without doing it; and had they not done it, there would not have been one protestant church in the world. But none are compelled to be of their church, much less to be instructors in it. And it is shameful in you to speak so often throughout your book of subscription as compelled, when you are forced to own it is not compelled. Much more shameful, if possible, is your saying, that if a man gives it as his reason for not subscribing the articles, that he does not believe them to be agreeable to the word of God, the church lays her hands on him with a vengeance, he incurs excommunication, is deprived of the communion, and, if his conscience should not become more tractable within forty days, he may be committed to prison, where he must lie and rot till he recants.† Here, to support a false charge, you set forth, as a fact, a process, of which you know you cannot give one single instance. But you have learned from the Papists to quote obsolete laws, in order to raise an odium against our church, instead of acknowledging in it that Christian spirit which forbears, (and I dare say you are satisfied ever will forbear,) putting them in execution. The conditions are not new; they have been known these 200 years. If you think all subscription unlawful,*

* Confess. p. 194.

† Confess. p. 195.

unlawful, why would you cast yourself into a track of life, in which you knew beforehand you could make no progress without subscribing? If you have been unwarily cast into it, but find the conditions, which will be required, are such as you cannot comply with, why will you persist in asking to be admitted a teacher of doctrines which you are determined to oppose? or why solicit for emoluments to which you are resolved not to intitle yourself? If with too implicit a faith you have already subscribed, but find cause afterward to dissent, examine whether the point you object to be indifferent, and merely of outward discipline; or one in which you judge the salvation of your hearers concerned. In the first case, submission would not be only innocent, but a duty; in the latter, all losses, even of life itself, must be risked, rather than comply. But in our church the penalty, by statute 13 Eliz. is only deprivation of his ecclesiastical promotions, excluding him from an office, and its reward annexed, which he refuses to discharge. The canon referred to is in great measure restrained by 1 Wm. and Mary; and the excommunication *ipso facto*, notwithstanding what you quote from Lyndwood, can have no effect without a declaratory sentence.

You say, *that the church of England is at all out of conceit with any part, either of her doctrine or discipline, does by no means appear by some late publick indications of her judgement herein*: referring to the convocation's address 1754, where it is hinted, that the church of England *bath no equal*.² And is it any crime, that the clergy of the church of England approve of the doctrine and discipline to which they have subscribed?

And

² Confess. p. 196. and note.

And if it does not appear that they are out of conceit with them, I should hope they would not be charged as prevaricators, as if they subscribed what they did not approve of. When you, who have subscribed both, are not ashamed so openly to censure both, I hope the more consistent clergy will not be ashamed to give the most publick indications, that their judgement agrees with their professions. And that we may not appear too partial to ourselves, let us refer the point to an unprejudiced by-stander, a foreigner, but no stranger to the church of England; nor to the objections made against her by our own countrymen. D. E. Jablonski writes to Dr. Nicholls from Berlin, Jan. 10, 1708, to this purpose.

‘ I spent my youth in Prussia and Poland, among
 ‘ British subjects, who were averse from the
 ‘ church of England, and had been parties in the
 ‘ disputes betwixt the Episcopalians and Presby-
 ‘ terians. Converse with them had filled
 ‘ my tender mind with such prejudices against
 ‘ your church, that when I came a young man
 ‘ into England, in 1680, I had an utter abhor-
 ‘ rence of it, and thought her publick places of
 ‘ worship were as much to be avoided as those of
 ‘ the papists. Soon after, in endeavouring to
 ‘ learn the language, I happened on the XXXIX
 ‘ Articles; the pure orthodoxy of which I so ap-
 ‘ proved of, that, doubting of my former opi-
 ‘ nion, I more closely examined the whole con-
 ‘ troversy; your ecclesiastical constitution, your
 ‘ liturgy, the objections made to each, and the
 ‘ whole foundation of the schism.

‘ The longer I communicated with that church,
 ‘ the more I grew confirmed in the opinion that
 ‘ her articles had no heterodoxy, her liturgy no
 ‘ idolatry or superstition, her government much
 ‘ good

good order and decency : and that on this account, among all the reformed churches, she came nearest to the pattern of the primitive church, and was deservedly esteemed the brightest star in the Christian heaven, the chief glory of the reformation, and the securest defence of the gospel against popery ; and that no one can refuse her communion without schism.

Yet I so follow and honor the church of England, as not to hate, but pity, your Presbyterians ; the greater part of whom, I believe, trained up in hereditary prejudices, act with a good conscience ; but that some amongst them abuse the simplicity of the rest.

And

Pueritiam meam in Prussia et Polonia contrivi Britannos inter homines ab ecclesia Anglicana alienos ; qui cum in patria certaminum Episcopales inter et Presbyterianos aliquando pars fuissent, post, patriam extorres, coetus nostros dictis in locis anxerant, severam plerumque pietate conspicui. Juge cum viris istis commercium tenellum animum tantis adversus ecclesiam vestram praediciis oppleverat, ut cum juvenis Angliam ingrederer (anno 1680) ecclesiam Anglicanam toto pectore horrerem, ejusque templa haud secus ac Pontificiorum devitanda esse centerem. Mox addiscendae linguae dum incumbam, in XXXIX ecclesiae Anglicanae articulos incido, qui cum intemerata sua orthodoxia mihi se probarent, pristinae sententiae nonnihil dubius, rem omnem penitus trutinandam mihi sumo ; constitutionem ecclesiae, rationem cultus Divini, praetensos utriusque navos, omneque schismatis fundamentum, quantum possum diligentiam ad examen revoco.

Quo autem diutius ecclesiae Anglicanae communionem usum, magis magisque in ea sententiam confirmatus fui, libros ejus symbolicos nihil habere heterodoxiae, cultum nihil idololatriae vel superstitionis, hierarchiam vero ordinis et decoris plurimum : eamque hoc nomine inter omnes ecclesias reformatas ad exemplar ecclesiae primitivae proximè accedere, meritòque audire sydus in caelo Christiano lucidissimum, decus reformationis primum, et evangelii adversus papatum propugnaculum firmissimum, cujus communionem absque schismatis nota aspernari possit nemo.

Ita

And surely if the church of England is not out of conceit with any part either of her doctrines or discipline, as she seems in the judgements of unprejudiced by-standers to have no cause to be, there can be no necessity for her to alter her articles or subscription: though I will not deny, nor I believe have the strictest churchmen ever denied, that some of them might be more accurately and unexceptionably expressed. I wish they who have written against our church would have been, or would learn to be, equally candid in their allowances. But surely there is no need to pull down all these fences, and let in the errors of Papists, Anabaptists, Arians, Socinians, Fatalists, Free-willers, Quakers, &c. some of which are not only contrary to the gospel truths, but dangerous to the commonwealth. I know that you and your friends sometimes speak as if you would find means of excluding papists; yet why they alone are to be excluded I cannot understand: But at other times, as in pag. 201. you would have endeavours used to agree upon a form of words, which every Christian minister may subscribe willingly; and this includes papists as well as others. You take great pains to accuse your brethren of favoring and promoting popery. Whether this project of yours would not promote it more, than all you can possibly charge them with, I leave, not to your own consideration, though heartily wishing that you were in a fitter
state

Ita autem ecclesiam Anglicanam colo et veneror, ut Presbyterianos vestros non tam odio quam commiseratione prosequor. Existimo enim majorem eorum partem, avitis præjudiciis imbutos, bonâ fide agere; minorem, reliquorum simplicitate abuti. — Relation des mesures qui furent prises dans les années 1711, 12, 13, pour introduire la liturgie Anglicane dans le Royaume de Prusse et dans électo-
rat de Hanover, p. 46, 47.

state of mind for it, but to that of your readers.

The papist would also find his account in it, if you could persuade us, that *a good and conscientious Christian in matters of practice, can do little harm by his mistaken opinions.*^b But to whom do you allow the benefit of this title? In one sense, the Pharisee Saul was, in matters of practice, a good conscientious Jew: Queen Mary the first, a good conscientious popish Christian: archbishop Laud, a good conscientious high church Christian: yet they did great harm by their mistaken opinions. And supposing persons were not to practice according to their mistaken opinions, which, however, good conscientious persons in most cases will; yet publishing their opinions, or even not opposing mistakes, may do much hurt: if popish doctrines will *do little harm*, why are you so zealous against popery? If an Antinomian, who thinks the grossest sins will not exclude one, who hath once been a true believer, from heaven, though he die in them, should yet lead a pious and virtuous life from a principle of gratitude, or any other, may not his followers *be far misled* by his notions? I apprehend there is no one article of Christian faith, but hath some tendency to purify either the life or the heart of him who believes it: and therefore provision should be made, as far as it can without inconvenience, for teaching them all. But *a conscientious mistaken Christian, you say, may possibly be a more edifying teacher in points of the utmost importance, concerning which, few are liable to err, than he who is warmed with the most sublimed spirit of orthodoxy.*^c And do you really think few are liable to err about points of the utmost

^b Confess. p. 197.

^c Page 198.

utmost importance? Are the Papists, are those against whom your book is written, but few? And do you not take them to err in points of the utmost importance? I and many others may think those points so, which you do not: and you may ridicule us as *warmed by the most sublimed spirit of orthodoxy*, while we are only *contending earnestly*, as the scripture bids us, *for the truth once delivered to the saints*, Jude. v. 3. Speak sincerely: would not you exclude us, if you could, from being publick teachers? Why then may not we endeavour to exclude you? It is doubtless possible, that a teacher, who errs in some points, may be more edifying in many or most, than one who thinks more justly. But the reverse is not only possible, but in general probable, and in fact, often certain. An orthodox man may be an uncharitable zealot; but he may also be full of benevolence, *in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves*, 2 Tim. ii. 25. A heterodox man may be mild and gentle: but he may also be furious and malicious: his errors may be innocent and unlikely to spread; or they may be such as will *increase unto more ungodliness, and eat as doth a canker*, 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17. If therefore you mean to put every honest man who preaches false doctrine upon a level with every honest man who preaches truth, we cannot think you one of those *good conscientious Christians, who can do no harm by their mistaken opinions*. And if doctrines are to be distinguished, and a guard set against dangerous ones, why is not subscription a proper guard?

Let such a one alone, say you, to follow his conscience, and he will be sincere, faithful, and diligent in dispensing the word of God, according to his best information.

Information.^d But the more diligent such a one is in dispensing the word of God, according to *his* best information, the more harm he will do. Let the papist alone to follow his conscience, and he will be diligent to stir the people up to rebellion against (as he esteems him) his heretical and excommunicated King: let the Anabaptist alone to follow his mistaken opinions, which he calls his conscience, and he will be diligent in taking the riches and goods of the right owners, and dispensing them to his followers.

But, as you procede, if you have a mind to make a knave of him, you cannot take a more effectual method, than to contrive tests for his disputable opinions.* Really, sir, the man of principle, and good conscientious Christian, as you have described him, claiming a right to prevaricate when he thinks others do it (at p. 192.); and using quirks and subtleties, when he finds himself bound by what he fancies unreasonable and unrighteous conditions, (at p. 197.) is knave enough in all conscience already. The utmost harm you can do him, is to make him *externally* an honest-er man; by bringing him under further obligations to be a dutiful subject, and to make him refrain from invading other peoples property.

In answer to your scoff at the close of this chapter,^f permit me to render good for evil. I grudge you not the fruits of your *insurance-office* for your preferment: but however you may trifle or prevaricate with *men*, I beseech you mock not *God*: take heed of making a solemn confession of faith to him, which you do not believe; and a solemn promise to your governours, which you are determined not to keep. Your conscience,

^d Confess. p. 198.

^e Ibid.

^f Confess. p. 201.

...which you are determined not to keep. I am
 have, and a solemn promise to your government,
 coalition of faith to him, which you do not be-
 most not God: this is the only way to a
 right or privilege with me, I believe you
 not your government: however you may
 thing: you not the only way to a
 change, peace, and good for all.
 In answer to your letter of the 10th of this
 remain from invading the property of
 there to be a double effect, and to make him
 or man, by bringing him under further obli-
 can do him, is a very useful and honest
 in all confidence already. The utmost harm you
 righteous conditions, (at p. 107.) inflicts enough
 bound by what he finds unreasonable and un-
 dults and resistance, when he finds himself
 others do it (at p. 102.); and thus
 him, claiming a right to prevent what he
 and resistance to him, as you have described
 him. I am, Dear Sir, Yours truly,
 that, as you proceed, if you have a mind to
 ...



A
T H I R D
L E T T E R

TO THE
A U T H O R
OF THE
CONFSSIONAL;

CONTAINING
R E M A R K S
ON THE
THREE LAST CHAPTERS
of that BOOK.

h. with the first letter.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WHISTON, at BOYLE'S HEAD, and
B. WHITE, at HORACE'S HEAD, in Fleet-street ;
And J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall.

M.DCC.LXVIII.

THE
TESTER

TO THE
AUTHOR

OF THE
CONFESSORIAL

CONTAINING

REMARKS

ON
THREE LATTERS
of the
K.



LONDON:

Printed for J. Whiston, at Bow's Head, and
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MDCCLXXII.

A
THIRD LETTER
 TO THE
AUTHOR
 OF THE
CONFESSIONAL.

REVEREND SIR,

CHAP. VI. **A**FTER having shewn your contempt of those whom you call the *orthodox clergy*, for believing what they profess, you procede in your sixth chapter to attack your friends, *the sons of truth and liberty*,* who professed what they did not believe. These last indeed, who only took the *liberty* of making free with *truth* for their own profit, or *did evil that what they thought good might come*, you cannot help complimenting at every stroke of chastisement. But you condemn both: where then, sir, are we to rank you, that you may escape your own censures? In a class and in a church by yourself? *Θῆς, ὡ ἀκεσίλαι, κλίματα, καὶ μόνον ἀνάβηθι τὸν οὐρανόν.*^b *Get thee a ladder, as*

B

Constantine

* Confess. p. 202.

^b Socrat. Schol. Hist. Eccles. Lib. I. c. 10. p. 180. Edit. R. Steph.

Constantine said to an uncharitable schismatick,
and climb to heaven alone.

One cannot but lament, say you, that to the laurels they gained in disputing with the church her right to demand subscription to her liturgy and articles, (which demand she does not make as you have been often told,) they did not add the glory of becoming confessors to their own principles, and of rather declining the affluence of a plentiful income, or the figure of a superior station, than accept of these emoluments on conditions, which must have been imposed upon them with some violence to their inclinations.^c How imposed? Scio: tu coactus tua voluntate es. And you conclude the chapter with observing, that consistency required that they should have withdrawn from a church, which usurped an authority that did not belong to her, and to have born their testimony against her in DEEDS as well as WORDS.^d Gently, sir, for your own sake. If these sons of truth and liberty are inexcusable in your own opinion, as well as in that of all honest men, why have you imitated them in that very fault for which you condemn them? for by speaking of the defenders of OUR church establishment,^e you seem to be of our church; by saying let us join in a petition that the affair of subscription should be considered only as an office of insurance for our respective preferments,^f you seem to have subscribed to our liturgy and articles, and to hold preferment by virtue of that subscription: Now, it confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes——Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost

^c Confess. p. 202.

^e P. 203.

^d P. 244.

^f P. 201.

dost thou steal? — Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? You think, perhaps, that you and others may lawfully keep what you ought not to have taken. But remember, that though Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness, 2 Pet. xi. 15. yet Judas would not retain his. Consider also that the same subscription, which was a condition of your being admitted to preferment, implied an engagement of teaching the doctrines which you subscribed; that you were admitted for the purpose of teaching them, and not of supporting yourself by the bread of the church in vilifying her tenets and institutions; than which nothing can be more unjust and contrary to good faith. Besides, to argue from your own notions, why should not men seek *the glory of becoming confessors to their own principles* by QUITTING as well as by DECLINING the affluence of a plentiful income or the figure of a superior station? why should they not withdraw from an usurping church, and bear testimony against her in deeds, and not words only, as well after they are beneficed as before? why should not the great bishop, who was vulnerable only in point of conformity, have made himself an invulnerable nonconformist? I ask you no questions concerning your own case, but leave it to your own mind.

Some of these [sons of truth and liberty] have said, that the reasonableness of conformity to the church of England is perfectly consistent with the rights of private judgement. But they must only mean of their own private judgement. For it is well known, that others who dissent from the church of England, are clearly justified in such dissent, upon those very principles which these conforming writers have laid down.^a You know that Dr. Sykes meant, the reasonableness

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^a Rom. ii. 19, 20, 21.^b Confess. p. 203.

of conformity to the church of England was consistent with that general right of private judgement, which all men, in proportion as they are indued with judgement, have: as the page which you refer to in his Answer to Dr. Rogers proves. And when you add that *dissenters are clearly justified in such dissent, upon those very principles which these conforming writers have laid down*, for this we have your word, as usual. But why may it not be said, that the contrary is well known; and that, as Dr. Sykes in the same page affirms, your favorite Bp. Hoadly has proved it? nay, you yourself quickly admit, that conformity is consistent with private judgement, if it may be reasonable to submit to what it is unreasonable to impose: which it surely is in multitudes of cases, and particularly in this; as Dr. Whitby, in his Protestant Reconciler, hath sufficiently made to appear.

What might not the firmness of a Hales and a Chillingworth formerly, or more lately, of a Clarke or an Hoadly, have obtained to us by this time? Which of us all, abused and vilified as these men have been, by bigots of different classes, would have wished to have seen them in another communion? I believe Hales and Chillingworth would have scrupled nonconformity much more than subscription. And a majority beyond all comparison would have wished that Hoadly and Clarke had been dissenters, rather than our church had been altered to their mind.

As to your question, *who will affirm the church established hath lost nothing by depriving these champions of the power of adding to their victories over the spiritual tyranny of Rome, a complete and solid vindication of her own doctrine, discipline, and worship?*

(8)
ship? The world hath seen, as often as occasion hath required it, that our doctrine, discipline, and worship may be vindicated much better as they now stand, than by the help of such changes as these champions would have made. And I have a very confused idea of an *established church*, which hath no explicit articles of faith or rules of practice; and in which not only the Lutheran and Helvetian, but the Anabaptist, the Cracovian, and the Moravian, Quaker, and Papist, may equally challenge a right of church membership.

You talk sometimes as if you only wished a reformation of our articles; but the whole drift of your book is for a total destruction of every thing of that kind. Those therefore who only desire reformations should be upon their guard against you. For you seem to think, because a man hath a right to use his private judgement, he is qualified for preferment in the established church, let his judgement be what it will; or at least without letting any person know what it is. Give us, once for all, ingenuously, plainly, and fully, your judgement and your arguments on this point: instead of writing *about it and about it* in broken and distant hints without end. If there ought to be no established church, no one is wronged by having no preferment in it: if there ought to be one it ought to have some doctrine, worship, and discipline. *Who* must determine what these should be? And by what other rule can such person or persons go, but by their own judgement on proper consideration and advice, what is enjoined, forbidden, or permitted by reason and scripture? And if others think their establishment unlawful, can they expect more than a toleration?

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In

* Ibid.

In examining the principles of your friends, the sons of truth and liberty, you begin with Dr. Clarke's Introduction to his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, whose reasonings you are now convinced are insufficient to justify his own practice and that of yourself, and others who were deceived by his sophistry.

The doctor's state of the case, you say, is briefly this :
 ' At the reformation, the doctrine of Christ and
 ' his apostles was again *declared* to be the only
 ' rule of truth, in which were contained all things
 ' necessary to faith and manners. And *had that*
 ' *declaration constantly been adhered to*, and human
 ' authority in matters of faith been disclaimed in
 ' DEEDS as well as in WORDS, there had been
 ' possibly no more schisms in the church of God,
 ' nor divisions of any considerable moment among
 ' Protestants."¹ But you think that the church of
 England hath *acted* contrary to this declaration in
 requiring clerical subscription to her XXXIX
 Articles : you conceive Dr. Clarke to think the
 same, if she require it to *her own sense* of them."^m
 But is extracting a *rule of faith* from the scriptures
 contrary to a declaration of making scriptures on-
 ly to be the rule of truth ? Not in Dr. Clarke's
 opinion, I apprehend ; for he had said before,
 ' The books of scripture are to us now, not only
 ' *the rule*, but *the whole*, and *only rule* of truth
 ' in matters of religion. (Intro. pag. v.) Never-
 ' theless, though the whole scripture is the rule of
 ' truth, and whatever is there delivered, infalli-
 ' bly true ; yet because there is contained in those
 ' writings great variety of things, and many oc-
 ' casional doctrines and decisions of controversies,
 ' which though all equally true, yet are not all
 ' equally necessary to be known and understood
 ' by

¹ P. 206.

^m P. 208.

by all Christians of all capacities; therefore the church from the beginning, hath, out of scripture, selected those plain fundamental doctrines, which were delivered as of necessity to be known and understood by all Christians whatsoever. And these all persons are taught in their *baptismal creed*, which was therefore usually called, *the rule of truth*. Not that itself was of any authority, any otherwise than as it expressed the sense of scripture; but that it was agreed to be such an *extract of the rule of truth*, as contained all the things immediately, fundamentally, and universally necessary to be understood and believed distinctly by every Christian. As in process of time, men grew less pious and more contentious, so in the several churches they enlarged their creeds and confessions of faith. — Human authority and temporal power increased; — and religion — at last was swallowed up in the great apostacy. Out of which it began to recover at the reformation; when the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was again declared to be the only rule of faith, in which were clearly contained all things necessary to faith and manners.” (Intro. p. ix.) But the scriptures being the same that they were before, they must contain at the reformation, as well as in the primitive time, a great variety of things, which, though all equally true, yet are not all equally necessary to be known and understood by all Christians of all capacities. Why then might not the church at that time, as well as at the beginning, select out of scripture the plain fundamental doctrines, necessary to be known and understood by all Christians whatsoever, as a rule of faith? Not that itself was of any authority, any otherwise than as it expressed the sense of scripture; but that it was AGREED to be such an EXTRACT

of the rule of truth as contained all the things immediately, fundamentally, and universally necessary to be understood and believed. Was it possible for the doctor to think that it had been better to have left, at the reformation, the scriptures only, containing that great variety of things, not all equally necessary to be known and understood, as the rule of faith to Christians of all capacities, without selecting any fundamental doctrines, and making for general use an *EXTRACT* of the rule of truth? And if he meant to say, or you to insinuate, that had the scriptures been so left, there had been possibly no divisions of any considerable moment among Protestants; I may have leave to say, that, possibly this is a mistake. And I will say it upon better grounds than conjecture, plain matter of fact. For when the English Protestants first objected to the impositions of Rome, when only scripture was their rule of faith, without any collection of fundamental and necessary doctrines, the divisions among Protestants became in a short time so numerous and considerable, that they found it necessary to frame this *EXTRACT* of the rule of truth, contained in the book of articles, comprehending not only all necessary doctrines, but some others which the state of the times made peculiarly requisite, on purpose to avoid those diversities of opinions which had destroyed their goaly concord.

By acknowledging the church of England hath authority in controversies of faith, you say men are obliged to take her interpretations of scripture, not only in preference to, but in exclusion of, their own: yet surely you cannot deliberately think so, after reading, as you doubtless have read, bishop Burnet's most rational exposition of those words.

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If the church hath decided any controversies in her articles, by a wrong interpretation (or what appears to you to be so, after a modest diffidence of your own judgement, and an impartial examination) you cannot as an honest man subscribe to those articles, though you may at the same time acknowledge in general, that her authority in controversies of faith is very considerable. If, after examination, you subscribe to her articles *ex animo*, as agreeable to scripture, you acknowledge the authority she hath used in deciding controversies was not more than she ought to have, and hath used well for instructing the people committed to her charge; not *excluding* your own judgement, but approving her decisions by it. The church of England did no more in forming her articles, than what Dr. Clarke acknowledges the primitive church did, as necessary; select these truths which were more fundamental, for general use, or more particularly needful under their circumstances at particular times; enlarging their confessions as people grew more contentious. These truths she particularly recommends to be taught, and encourages the teaching of them: those whom she judges in error by contradicting these truths, she will not encourage, nor commit her people to their charge. This authority she certainly hath, and may exercise without abridging any man's liberty; although perhaps an old anabaptist might think he was injured, by requiring him to renounce, if he will be a teacher, what he pleads as his gospel right, a right in common to the possessions of other people.

You think, by Dr. Clarke's casuistry, a man may be obliged to understand, reconcile and assent to Pape Pius's creed, or a chapter in the Koran, in
such

such a sense as appears to him to be consistent with the doctrine of scripture.* I am no defender of Dr. Clarke's caluistry; and am sorry he published such a libel, as you complain, to the consciences of several others, as well as of yourself.

Dr. Clarke, as you procede, claims the declarations of the church in the 6th, 20th, and 21st, Articles, as giving countenance to his scheme of subscription. Dr. Waterland answers, that these declarations amount to no more, than that nothing is to be received, but what is agreeable to scripture. And for this very reason the church requires subscription in her own sense, because she judges no other sense to be agreeable to scripture. This, you say, is giving the church but an indifferent character; representing her as insinuating one thing and meaning another. But if it is a true character, who can help it? The thing she means is not inconsistent with the thing she insinuates. But it would be endless to point out your sophisms as often as you use them. The church insinuates that she hath no right to teach any doctrines but what are agreeable with scripture; and such doctrines she means should be taught. I therefore join in Dr. Waterland's conclusion, to which you say he is fairly intitled, 'If any judge that the church's own sense is not agreeable to scripture, let them not subscribe.'†

You next produce an advocate on Dr. Clarke's side, arguing, that unless men be allowed to subscribe the article in any sense which the words will bear, and in which they may be reconciled to the subscriber's own sense of scripture, and the other authorized forms of the church, nobody can subscribe our articles, creeds, and liturgies; there being several things in them, which if taken in the most obvious sense contradict one another.‡ And you allow it. But whereas he concludes

* P. 211.

† Ibid.

‡ P. 212.

§ Confess. p. 213, 214.

concludes from hence, that they must be subscribed with this liberty, you conclude, that they ought not to be subscribed at all. For, say you, *might not the most crude system of paganism be made good Christian divinity, by putting a less obvious sense upon it?* Thus he allows all possible liberty, and you allow none. Let us consider the matter impartially. There are few compositions, if any, of which every word or phrase is to be understood in the most obvious sense, that would present itself, if we had no regard to other parts of the same work, or to other works formed on the same principles, or to the known or probable intention of the writer. Whatever these shew to be the true sense, is (though perhaps not always the most obvious, yet) the sufficiently obvious sense of the words, to a considerate person, in the place where they are found, though in another place it would not. For it will ordinarily be soon, if not immediately, obvious to such a one, that here it is their only sense. And words should be taken in any sense, which they will really, that is, rationally and equitably, bear, rather than make an author inconsistent with himself or with truth. To the sacred writers we owe this respect in the highest degree: to expressions evidently formed on theirs in the next: but to all others, in proportion only to the abilities and integrity of those who use them, and to the other material circumstances of the case. If expressions cannot be justified without interpreting them by forced and unnatural sketches, limitations, or constructions, we must give them up, and refuse our assent to them. It hath indeed been pleaded, that our articles and liturgy are proposed to us to be subscribed, only because they are agreeable to scripture, and therefore only in that sense in which they

they are agreeable to scripture. But still how can a person subscribe them, if he is so unhappy as to think, that some of them are agreeable to scripture in no sense, that is, in no just and fair sense? The truth is, that they are proposed because the proposer thinks them agreeable to scripture in such a certain sense which they express: and therefore wants to know, whether the persons to whom they are proposed, think so likewise. What that sense is, if there be any doubt, must be determined by the usual methods. But torturing expressions to make them bear meanings, which they will not bear consistently with the language and the intention, in order to profess a seeming approbation of them, cannot be allowable.

Following these rules, which are evidently right ones, you will allow, that Dr. Clarke's subscription is indefensible: he and you think that Dr. Waterland's is so too. But why? he confesses that "sometimes in our publick forms, the Father is styled only God; oftner all Three: sometimes two of the persons are introduced in a subordination of order to the first; at other times their perfect equality of nature is fully and clearly professed." And these, you say, are contradictions and obscurities objected by Dr. Clarke. But Dr. Clarke was too wise a man to object mere obscurities on this subject. And the same seeming contradictions are found in scripture: *There is but one God, the Father;* yet *Christ is over all, God blessed for evermore.* He said, *the Father is greater than I;* yet by saying that *God was his Father, he made himself equal to God.* Now if these scriptures can be reconciled, which you will own they can, so may our forms which are built on them. To reconcile

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 6.

² John xiv. 28.

³ Rom. ix.

⁴ John v. 18.

concile either in any way, some expressions must be taken in their less obvious sense. And therefore barely taking them so, is not, on either side, *ridiculous sophistry*, as you call it. But the question is, Do the Trinitarians interpret any of them in a manner that is unjustifiable? Your opinion that they do, cannot decide the point without proof. And you produce only this proof that *equality of nature excludes all sorts and degrees of subordination; for subordination of order is nonsense.*² There are certainly, or I am quite a stranger to the use and meaning of words, many sorts and degrees of subordination among men, in the state, the church, the army, nay, in every family, yet all have an equality of nature, being all equally men: this therefore is not a subordination of *nature*. And if any, by way of distinction, call it a subordination of *order*, and should farther, instead of saying that the Father, as such, is first, and the Son, as such, is second in order, say that the latter is subordinate *in order* to the former; the worst you could make of it is a kind of tautology or redundancy, which may sometimes be useful to ascertain that subordination of *nature* is not meant. Nonsense it is not; for you know the meaning of it; Sonship in the strictest sense implies, not an *inferiority* or diversity, but an *equality* of nature. Such the Jews understood our Saviour to claim, when he called God his *own Father*, (*πατέρα ἰδίον*) nor doth he deny it.

Your next advocate for latitude of subscription is *the acute writer of the case of subscription, commonly supposed to be Dr. Sykes.*³ But as he argues chiefly from Dr. Waterland's concessions, you pass over this pamphlet as not having in it much which hath not already fallen under notice. *However,*
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² P. 213, 214.

³ P. 215. and note.

Some things in it, you say, deserve our further consideration.

*Great stress, you say, is there laid upon K. Charles I.'s declaration, which gave the latitudinarian subscribers the first hint of general, literal, and grammatical senses. And to shew that this stress is wrongly laid, you add, the XXXIX Articles being established by statute for avoiding diversities of opinions, the declaration which is understood to have introduced these senses was just as subversive of the ecclesiastical, as K. James II.'s declaration for liberty of conscience was of the civil constitution.** Now in and before Charles I.'s time there were warm disputes betwixt those whom you call Arminians, and the Calvinists : and the express purpose of the King's declaration was not, as you falsely represent it, to allow those diversities of opinions, but, 'not to suffer such unnecessary disputations.' In order to put a stop to them, he 'ratifies and confirms the articles of the church of England, requiring all his subjects to continue in the uniform profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said articles.' Was this subverting the ecclesiastical constitution by dispensing with the statute law of the land from which the articles derived their obligation ?

*But the title of the articles sets forth, that they were agreed upon 'for the preventing diversities of opinions;' and consequently, for preventing of all general, literal, and grammatical senses, which admitted diversities of opinions.** But here, sir, you change the title of the article : undesignedly perhaps, but not without some danger of misleading your readers. Their chief intent was to avoid those novelties, which then distracted the church : not to prevent such diversities, which, being in a great

* P. 206.

* Ibid.

great measure unforeseen, it would not be their principal business to provide against. Nor is the declaration more accurately represented. You quote in Italicks *general, literal, or grammatical senses*, which *admitted* diversities of opinions; as if the purpose of the declaration, expressed in its own words, was to encourage such diversities: nothing like it appears there. It observes that men of all sorts took the articles of the church of England to be with them in the TRUE USUAL LITERAL meaning of the said articles; that is, the Calvinist plainly saw *predestination* asserted in them, and *the grace of God*: the Arminian as plainly saw *conditional decrees and free-will* in them: but each wrested it to what it did not assert, the one in favor of *absolute decrees*, the other of *absolute free-will*. To *compose*, not *incourage*, this diversity, the declaration *wills these disputes be shut up in God's promises, as they be generally set forth to us in the holy scriptures and the GENERAL meaning of the articles of the church of England according to them*. Intending that both sides should acquiesce in that general meaning, without going beyond it, and restraining it to the particular sense, which the one or the other might in his private judgement find out for it. And therefore it adds, *no man—shall put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the article, but shall take it in the LITERAL and GRAMMATICAL sense*. Which the rigid Calvinists were so sensible was an insufficient ground for their interpretation, that when they wanted to establish *their* sense, they durst not trust to the grammatical sense, but called in aid the 9 Lambeth articles to explaine the XVIIth: And desired an alteration of the XVIth. And this I take to be the design of the King's declaration: not to appoint, as a new rule for the interpretation of

of the articles, that they should be taken in the usual literal grammatical sense, which of course must always have been the rule: but, beside confirming this rule, to direct that preachers should content themselves with this sense, without running into disputes about particulars, which, understanding the articles thus, were not determined by them. This was a prudent, seasonable, needful admonition: and, instead of introducing a diversity of senses, took an effectual way to discourage them, in proportion as it was regarded.

The writer of Remarks on Dr. Powell's sermon, whom you recommend to us in the note at page 217, hath by no means overthrown Dr. Fuller's assertion concerning the latitude designed by the compilers of the articles of 1562. He calls it indeed, as you do after him, *a fancy*; but it is a fact, related by him as an historian, that some have unjustly taxed the compilers for too much favor extended in their large expressions: (Now these could not be persons who wanted to screen themselves under these large expressions, for they blamed them:) and that when Rogers printed his Exposition of the articles in 1584, some were offended that his interpretation confined the charitable latitude in these articles.^c Now this exposition being published but thirteen years after the articles were established by parliament, the charitable latitude, formerly allowed, must have been surely cœval with the articles. And how doth the remarker disprove Fuller? He saith that Fuller, instead of confuting the taxation, admits the fact it alledges, without the least shadow of a support. And indeed he doth not produce his vouchers, as he seldom doth. But he was so likely to know the truth, that

^b Church Hist. Book ix. 72.

^c Ibid p. 172, 173.

that he may be believed, when he saith, that such complaints were made. Indeed either the complainers or he went too far in saying, that the composers in 1562 *extended too much favor in their large expressions throughout the contexture of these articles*, if they meant that more was extended *throughout these*, than throughout K. Edward's; for they are in most places the same. But they might and did extend in *some* places more than his. The remarker attempts to prove, that his extended no favor; because he would not trust the convocation to make them, but employed *some select confidants, cordial to the cause of religion*. But why might not these be moderate, as well as cordial? He ridicules the notion, that they could *prediscover doctrinal differences, which had no existence when the articles were composed*. Yet why might they not, without the gift of prophecy, *providently foresee*, as Fuller expresses it, pag. 173, that doctrinal differences would inevitably arise, in points not determined by ancient councils, even between Protestants agreeing in fundamentals; and have it in their view amongst other things purposely to couch the articles relative to them in general terms: not that falshood should take shelter under the covert thereof, but to include all proper dissenters within the comprehensiveness of the expressions? But their chief design was to avoid the differences which did *then* exist; and few differences exist now which did not exist then. The remarker saith, pag. 52, that K. James was the first who found out their descretion and moderation. But we have in Fuller historical evidence, that it was found out, both by friends and enemies, long before he came into England; and much longer still before K. Charles's declaration was published by Layd's advice.

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You say, that Rogers hath greatly the advantage of all expositors that come after him in point of authority. For his book was dedicated to Bancroft, whose chaplain he was, and bears in the front of it a testimony, that it was perused, and, by the lawful authority of the church of England, allowed to be publick. Now Fuller saith, Rogers's book was published in 1584, which he himself tells us he did voluntarily, of his own accord, and altogether unconstrained. Afterward, in 1607, he republished it, with a preface inscribed to Abp. Bancroft, whose chaplain he might then be: and as the chaplains to the prelates of Canterbury and London were the licensers of books, he might express his own licensing his own book in this form, as you acknowledge in your note. But you add in the same note, as there can be no doubt but he took Bancroft's sense of the matter (of what matter?) for his rule, he certainly had the authority of the church of England for publishing his book, and became the mouth of the church on the strength of that authority. Now that Bancroft ever read the book, or a line of it, we have only your guess. He might only have heard a good character of it, or only think well of the man; or he might have read it long before, and remember little about it. He appears not to have been with the archbishop at the time, as he dates his preface from Horninge near St. Edmund's-bury in Suffolk. And had the archbishop intended to give the sanction of his own name to the book, it would have been some way distinctly said. Yet this, you inform us, is our only authoritative exposition of the articles, for Burnet declares that his was not a work of authority. What, does the permission or approbation of one archbishop
certainly

certainly give Rogers's book *the authority of the church of England*, and yet the approbation of two successive archbishops, besides other bishops, give none to Burnet's? Burnet, it is evident, was a man of modesty. I wish I could with truth give you the like character.

Nothing is more evident, you inform your readers, than that queen Elizabeth's bishops either had no notion that latitude and toleration were gospel privileges, or an utter aversion to such notion, as *sabismatical and puritanical*. Yet all persons approve latitude and toleration, in some things, to some degree. The church of Rome itself doth; the first reformers did; queen Elizabeth's bishops did: some more, perhaps, and some less. And where is your proof, that they did not allow that latitude in the XVIIth and other articles, for which the Calvinists contend? But you say, they would have looked on notions of latitude and toleration as puritanical. Are you not ashamed? Why do you not confess, like a fair and honest man, that queen Elizabeth's puritans had as little notion of latitude and toleration, as her bishops.

He that composes a form of words' (*says the ingenious author of the case*) 'either so inaccurately, or so designedly, as that the propositions contained in them, in the usual literal construction, may or do signify different things, hath no reason to complain of prevarication, if men of very different notions unite in subscribing such forms.' You answer, *the church denies this is her case.* And I presume any one may answer for the church, that she is not designedly *inaccurate*: but when she is obliged to treat of points, which are in part peculiarly above our reach, she must be *inaccurate*, from

the inadequateness of our ideas, and the inability of language to express what cannot be fully comprehended. Or if the scripture expressions are indeterminate in which she cloaths any article, the sense of that article must be left indeterminate also.* Such latitude of interpretation as these things require, may well be allowed. As to any, arising from new and modern senses of words, against which you proceed to argue, I plead not for it; but leave those, who do, to defend it.

Another sincere friend to religious liberty you introduce, is Phileleutherus Cantabrigienfis, who insists, that *“no articles, as a rule and standard of doctrinal preaching, ought to be imposed, because of the great danger that the right of Christians to private judgement incurs by such imposition.”*^b The church is *the pillar and stay of the truth.*^c Which truth she is to teach her disciples, according as their capacities will bear, or their circumstances require; giving *milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age.*^d Is she then not authorized to make an extract of these truths, inculcating such as are necessary for all, and adding occasionally others which their particular circumstances call for, as a rule and standard of doctrinal preaching? what is there in this that is not agreeable to scripture? what that is contrary to the right of private judgement? must not teachers instruct according to their judgement of scripture; or must they teach according to the judgement of those who need to be instructed? The disciple, after all, may reject the doctrine if he pleases; and the candidate for an appointment to teach may do the same: but will such candidate claim as his privilege by the gospel a right to be appointed a teacher

* See before, 2d Lett. chap. V. p. 154—159.

^b Confess. p. 223. ^c 1 Tim. iii. 15. ^d Hebr. v. 13, 14.

er of doctrines which those directed to examine his faith are verily persuaded are contrary to the gospel; and to demand from the civil power reward and encouragement for so doing?

You wonder what idea this very sensible writer had of peace, when he supposed it might be kept, by the act of subscription, among men of such different judgements as he mentions.¹ I intirely agree with you that the same men, with safety to the peace of the church, might subscribe as many several forms of words, each expressing his own system clearly and explicitly, as subscribe the same form of words in so many different senses.² But can the peace of the church be any better preserved by men's subscribing the scripture in different senses, than by subscribing the articles in different senses? or must all men subscribe to scripture in one and the same sense? And who shall know whether they do? or is it not evident, that if this method were tried, they would not? and are not some of these differences such, as will exclude men from the benefits of Christianity? and ought not such to be excluded from Christian communion?

But is not Christ, you ask, king in his own kingdom? is he not the only lord and master in matters pertaining to conscience? and can any man give way to an usurpation of that authority, which Christ claims solely to himself, without revolting from his allegiance, and submitting to an usurper of his kingdom?² Christ is king in his own kingdom: his command to the ministers of his church was, Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe whatever I have command-

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¹ P. 224.

² Ibid.

³ Confess. p. 225.

ed you. Therefore, in so baptizing, and in so teaching, his ministers do not usurp an authority which Christ claims solely to himself, but which he hath commissioned them to exercise. He who submits not to this doctrine revolts from his allegiance; and he who claims a right to teach contrary to it is the usurper. Do we then disobey or obey Christ's kingly authority, when we refuse to let those, who, according to the best of our judgement, reject one or more of the essential articles of his doctrine, communicate with us? Yet you, if you are to be understood, would have them more than communicants; you would have them admitted as teachers.

I need not meddle with the next writer, nor with the answer which you have given him from page 225 to page 228; but must take notice of a gross misrepresentation of your own, which you often repete through your book, though perhaps in different words. I have already been several times obliged to mention it, and should be glad to meet with no farther occasion of doing so. It is your assertion, that *the moment a man sits down to subscribe the XXXIX Articles, circumstanced and conditioned as that subscription now is, he sits down to sign away his right [of private judgement]. . . . and to transfer it to the church.* Now you introduce this by saying, *We frankly allow that every Protestant, as such, hath a right to deny his assent to, or approbation of, any doctrine, which he himself conceives to be contrary to the scriptures.* And hath he not an equal right to declare his assent to any doctrine, or his approbation of it, which he himself conceives to be agreeable to scripture? is not giving such assent as much an exercise of his right

* Matth. xxviii. 19, 20.

† Confess. p. 229.

‡ Ibid.

right of private judgement as his denying it? How then doth he sign away his right, and transfer it to the church, when he subscribes, *willingly and ex animo*, that he believes the doctrines, proposed to his consideration by the church of England, are agreeable to scripture? For this you charge her with *acting* contrary to what she *professes*: she *professes* that nothing but what is read in scripture, or may be proved thereby, should be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or necessary to salvation.—But who shall judge of what is *there read or may be thereby proved*?—She for herself: every private person who thinks he can, for himself. Accordingly, she requires candidates for orders to promise, that they will teach nothing as necessary, but what they shall be persuaded may be so proved. Indeed she doth not teach near so much as may be proved thereby to be necessary: but admits to her communion persons, who doubt or disbelieve doctrines, which she takes to be scripture truths, provided they still hold those, which she takes to constitute most Christians. But she doth not profess, and surely she ought not, to admit, as Christians, those whom she takes to be no Christians. With respect to her teachers, she follows a different, yet a consistent, rule. She looks on some doctrines as being, though not necessary, yet very important, either always or on particular occasions. Therefore she judges it improper to admit any one as a member, who doth not make a profession of them. If he judges it unlawful to make that profession, he may follow his own opinions, as she follows hers: neither hath a right to overrule the other. Either may be in the wrong, or both: one in one part, and the other in a different part. Endeavouring

to shew modestly which errs, and where, is a charitable office. But accusing the church of a *glaring inconsistency* with what she professes, merely for practicing any rules at all of this kind, is a *glaring absurdity*. And yet it is the avowed, and were it possible for you to keep close to your point, would have been the whole business of your book, which hath employed you longer than the Trojan war did the Greks: *impositions, compulsive subscriptions, unrighteous compliances, articles obtruded, starving inquisitions*, are ecchoed from almost every page of it. Your first eleven years have been spent in repeating this charge: it will cost you more than another eleven to prove it.

The last writer you mention on this subject is Bp. Clayton, who thinks *“any attempt towards avoiding diversity of opinions, not only to be an useless, but an impracticable, scheme.”* In which you intirely agree with him: but say, *it was actually the attempt of our first reformers and is still the scheme of the churches of England and Ireland.* Surely this is not intirely agreeing with Dr. Clayton, who *“doubts whether the compilers of the articles ever agreed exactly in their opinion, not only with regard to all the articles, but even with regard to any one of them.”* Had they a scheme to make all men of one opinion by subscribing articles in the sense of which they themselves were not agreed? But perhaps you do not adopt Dr. Clayton’s opinion in this case: and indeed, to say the truth, it is difficult to be sure what your opinion is; sometimes Cranmer was the sole compiler, sometimes there were more. Sometimes the articles have but one sense; at other times you ask, *What shall we say of those compilers who perhaps, . . . were wedded to Calvin’s form of church discipline?*

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can any one say that they held no opinion diverse from this interpretation? or can any one think that they would agree to the passing this article, but that they thought it was conceived in such general terms, that they might subscribe it with a good conscience, and without equivocation.* This relates to the XXIII^d Article; Cranmer and Ridley were certainly Episcopalians; and if other compilers were wedded to Calvin's form of church discipline, your argument will lead us to suppose only that the compilers agreed in allowing Presbytery to be of publick authority at Geneva, and Episcopacy in England; consequently they did not attempt to avoid such diversity of opinion, as should condemn either, in their respective places, as unlawful. And at page 214 you tell us, that *subscribers subscribe to several senses, in the intention of the church.* One who says this, however false it may be, cannot consistently charge the church with the impracticable scheme of avoiding all diversity of opinion.

But Dr. Clayton has a further doubt, which you elsewhere quote with approbation, whether any two thinking men ever agreed exactly in their opinions with regard to any one of the articles.† Try this in several of them, and it will be found one of the most extravagant doubts that ever was formed. Many may disagree concerning the answer to many questions that may be asked about the doctrine, which is the subject of the article, and yet perfectly agree in all that the article affirms concerning it. From neglect of this distinction arises one of the perpetual sophisms of the writers against the articles. It might almost as well have been said, that no two men ever agreed in any one opinion whatever.

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* Confess. p. 160.

† P. 232. and p. 77.

You do not intirely fall in with his opinion, that *no society or common-wealth can subsist, unless some form of religion or other be established therein:* because, as St. Paul thought that men might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, under proper subjection to, and coercion of, the civil magistrate, you do not see that you should be ashamed to think so too.* But by your leave, Sir, St. Paul does not say, whatever he thought, (and how else can you know what he thought?) that men might lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, under the coercion of the civil magistrate, but in consequence of supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, in the Christian assemblies. Did St. Paul think that the Christian religion had no influence in making people to be in proper subjection to the civil magistrate; or that men could live quiet and peaceable lives without such influences? In his Epistle to Titus he represents it as a part of sound doctrine to put men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates: in opposition to their conduct before they were influenced by that doctrine, when they had been equally under the coercion of the magistrate: *For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another,* ch. iii. 1, 3. Nay, you yourself, so irresistible is the force of truth, express a sounder opinion a few pages after; saying, *human laws reach the exigencies of civil society so imperfectly, that unless the influence of religion is connected with them, the welfare and peace of society cannot be supported. Which I apprehend no body will deny.**

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* Confess. p. 234, 235.

* P. 242.

But you say, *You cannot see why establishing the scriptures should not answer all the ends of civil society, in this respect, as well as any other forms.* If you have found out an expedient, by which you can so establish the scriptures as to convey them wholly into the heads of the common people, and prevent the *unlearned and unstable* from *wresting them to their own destruction*, I will acknowledge no form, interpretation, or extract, comparable to it. But if the scriptures contain more than any ordinary head can remember, or even your own extraordinary one; and what is remembered, is so subject to be *wrested*, of which your own book furnishes many proofs; to establish the scripture only, with all its liableness to being wrested, (and you think it an unhappy mistake in the first reformers, that they thought *the true sense of scripture could be but one*.) I refer you to the author of the Confessional for his opinion of such like establishments: *If the church ACCEPTS and TOLERATES, she likewise MAINTAINS, contrary opinions. For the persons, whose contrary opinions she ACCEPTS and TOLERATES, do, by this very act of subscription, become part of the body of the church itself; . . . and retail their contrary opinions to the publick, by the very authority which the church gives them. Is not this to lift the church off her ancient foundations?* The church of England therefore, to avoid such diversity of opinions, and to convey to the people those parts of scripture which are more necessary and useful, and to guard against the perverse wrestings of hereticks, papists, and enthusiasts, adopted the ancient creeds, and framed her articles and liturgy. Put only the prophet Isaiah into the hands of the common people, and ask any of them, *Understandest thou what*

what thou readeſt? Might they not juſtly answer with the eunuch, *How can I, except ſome man guide me?*^b And when, from the ſcriptures ſo explained, he himſelf deduced, or aſſented to Philip's deduction, from them, and believed that *Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of God*, he did not thereby give up his right of private judgement, but *exerciſed* it: Nor did he, by uſing the aid of an interpreter, prefer human explications to the word of God, but better underſtood the word of God by the means of ſuch explication. How much leſs would the common people without it be able to underſtand the *whole Bible*? You indeed venture to ſay, *that points of Chriſtian doctrine cannot be made plainer in them* (human forms and explications) *than they are already in the ſcripture.*^c Then we have no need of interpreters of ſcripture: all plain accounts, and explanations of *The ſcripture doctrine of the Trinity*, which are human forms, were ridiculous attempts to explaine what was as plain before the explanation as afterwards; which, however true, I ſuppoſe the eminent prelate, who died in 1761, and Dr. Clarke, your good friends and clients, did not apprehend. Now, the right which they, in their private capacities, aſſumed, I humbly conceive the ſynod of their country might exerciſe.

You cenſure a conſequence which you think follows from Bp. Clayton's principles, which is, that *every diſſenter from theſe eſtabliſhed forms breaks in upon the peace and welfare which uniformity is intended to maintain.* And this, at once, demolishes all thoſe ſystems of government, which tolerate doctrines and diſciplines, contrary to the eſtabliſhed forms.^d I have not taken upon me the defence

^b Acts viii. 30, 31.

^c Confess. p. 238.

^e Confess. p. 236.

of Bp. Clayton's principles or practices; antecedents or consequences. But, in my judgement, doubtless every dissenter doth harm: yet he may also accidentally do good, by making others more studious and circumspect. And societies should bear with the harm, because it must be presumed to procede, without bad intention, from the imperfection of human nature: and intolerance of tolerable opinions and practices would do much more harm.

His Lordship says, 'If men were not to speak their minds in spite of establishments' (that is to say, openly profess things contrary to establishment) 'truth would soon be banished from the earth.' On which you ask, doth not this plainly imply, that establishments banish truth from the earth, in the same proportion as they answer the ends of peace and welfare to the civil community? Civil establishments of religion do harm upon the whole, where the people, without them, would have better notions of religion, than they have with them. They do harm in part, where any thing wrong or false is mixt with them: and yet may often do less harm, than the want of any. When such cases happen, is not always easy to determine, nor perhaps of much use. For if there were no good establishment, where there now is, there would be no fewer bad ones elsewhere. Every man hath a right to judge, what he shall believe and profess, and what he shall advise and encourage others to believe and profess: and his liableness to mistake in this doth not take away his right, as hath been before explained. Thus the supreme magistrate or legislative power hath a right to advise and encourage the people to believe and practice the religion which he thinks true. And so

so far as they practice it from their belief, they are not hypocrites. They are not bound to believe or profess what he doth. Indeed if he leads them wrong, truth will suffer, more or less : yet neither will it be soon banished from the earth, even were he to be wicked enough to use force with them ; nor banished in proportion as his establishment produces peace in the society. For it may produce peace, by keeping such men in some order, as would else have no religion, or a worse than his : and this hurts not truth. And joined with a toleration, which ought ever to accompany it, it may produce both more truth and more peace, than if there were no establishment.

It doth not follow, as you represent it, that if the magistrate may establish the religion which he thinks best and truest, *there never was any authentic revelation.* There may have been one, and he may have established *that* ; or there may be one, and he not have heard of it, or not have been convinced of it ; and yet he may establish what, so far as it goes, is consistent with it : or, if it be inconsistent, it will be only exercising his right wrongly, as hath been already explained. He hath no right to require an uniformity of profession. And conscientious dissenters are not wicked opposers of God's authority ; for God doth not require them to conform, while they think it unlawful : nor ought the magistrate to require from them the profession of what they do not believe, nor they to comply with him if he doth.

Now if all these your favorites, and *sincere friends to religious liberty*, as you describe them, are, by the proofs you have produced, *contradic-*

tory

tory and inconsistent, not only with each other, but
 even with themselves, who can help it? may we
 not account for it, still in your own words, that
 while they were endeavouring to repair, they were
 only dawdling with untempered mortar. Yet the incon-
 sistency is not, as you strangely state it, betwixt
 the scheme of churchmen and their principles. Your
 words are, if you take their several schemes as
 they are founded upon the church's declarations . . .
 then perfectly consistent is the reasonableness of con-
 formity with the rights of private judgement: but
 go back to their PRINCIPLES of Christian li-
 berty . . . and you will find there is nothing
 more inconsistent with these principles, than the au-
 thority which the church of England claims and
 exercises. Now, if the church of England claims
 no more than she declares, and her declarations are
 consistent with her principles of liberty, and
 her scheme is founded upon her declarations,
 then perfectly consistent will her scheme be with
 her principles. If the church of England de-
 clares nothing is to be taught contrary to the scrip-
 tures, she doth not act inconsistently in claiming
 an authority to refuse to commission those as teach-
 ers, whose doctrines she judges contrary to the
 scriptures. The only inconsistency in the whole
 affair is between the voluntary profession of
 your friends, and their belief. And consistency
 required of them, not, as you say, to have with-
 drawn from a church which usurped an authority
 that did not belong to her; ¹ but, that they should
 not have sued to be permitted to subscribe arti-
 cles, which they did not inwardly believe. If they
 have been deceived by any fallacies, framed by
 themselves or other sophists, into a rash subscrip-
 tion, and they find afterwards that, in conscience,
 they

^a P. 201.

^b P. 243.

¹ P. 244.

they cannot comply with the conditions required by the church of all her ministers, you imagine Dr. Conybeare would have determined, *an obligation lay upon them to resign their preferments in the church.*^k Therefore, if you acquiesce in this determination, as you seem to do, and yet fail of acting in consequence of it, in such manner as you ought, it will not be for want of knowledge; and you will stand self-condemned.

Convinced of the dissingenuity and
CHAP. VII. unjustifiableness of Arian subscription, notwithstanding the obliging sophistry of Dr. Clarke to explain the very Athanasian creed into an Arian one, you can neither hope for more preferment, nor consistently keep what you have, unless this obligation to subscription be taken off. To obtain this end is the chief aim and purpose of your book; and you attempt it by two different ways. You sometimes represent it as unjustifiable to require any subscription to Articles, or assent to confessions of faith. And could you have proved this point at all, your proof might have lain in a very little compass, and the rest of your book would have been superfluous and useless. But then you must have lost the opportunity of a great many bitter reflections, which, however unjust, you could not persuade yourself to forego. And though you certainly designed to please those, who would have all fences thrown down, yet whether you inwardly wish that, or only to have such as stand in your way demolished, may be at least doubtful. Besides, attacking the constant practice of all churches in all ages, seemingly founded on scripture too, hath the appearance of being

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^k P. 231.

a romantick enterprize. And therefore you endeavour to shew, in the second place, that if there must be something to answer the purpose of articles, they should not, however, be those of the church of England, as they now stand: which opens to you a fresh vein of satyrical remarks. Had you spoken to these two points methodically, it had been easy to see how you advanced in your argument; what was to your purpose, and what not. But you have mixed your reasonings upon each confusedly, and thrown into the midst of both, facts true and false, reproaches just or unjust, digressions pertinent or otherwise, to such a degree, that the reader can scarce ever see whereabouts he is; and the answerer hath every now and then his work to begin anew: at present, you labor to discredit, not subscription in general, but subscription to the articles of our church. And to bring the Orthodox, as you call them in derision; over to your purpose, you take great pains to shew, that the articles have but one sense; which one sense in many of the articles is as contrary to the opinions of most of the subscribing clergy, as it is against the Arians in those relating to the Trinity. You instance especially in the XVIIth article, which you represent as certainly intended by the compilers in the Calvinistical sense; yet this article is now commonly subscribed in the Arminian: consequently, it as much concerns the orthodox, as the Arians, to get rid of our present subscription. This is the *master argument* by which you attempt to effect your purpose.

The XVIIth Article is your grand battering ram, with which you threaten us from one end of your book to the other; but principally through the whole of this long seventh chapter you apply

it against us with unwearied perseverance. A few plain facts will repel, and drive it back upon the engineer.

You begin this chapter with asserting, *It is a fact in which our historical writers of all parties agree, that, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and for some part of the reign of King James I. there was no difference between the episcopal churchmen and the Puritans, in matters of doctrine. The contests, between the bishops and the Puritans of those times concerning subscriptions, arose from those articles which asserted the powers of an episcopal hierarchy, and an authority to prescribe and injoin rites and ceremonies.* That the episcopal churchmen and puritans differed on other articles than the episcopal hierarchy is manifest from the bishops proceedings against Dering and other principal men among the puritans, for holding, against the III^d article, the Calvinistical explanation of Christ's descent into hell.^b And also for holding the unlawfulness of the government of women.^c The puritans were likewise censured for holding 'it lawful for
' a private man openly to disprove or condemn, in
' doctrine, that thing that is established by publick
' authority, before he hath by humble supplica-
' tion shewed the error thereof to the said autho-
' rity : expressing his name and hand to the same.'^e From whence I infer, that they did contradict the doctrines as well as the discipline of the church ; and that to do so by a publick writing, not addressed to the Queen, parliament, or convocation, and without a name, was at that time of day judged a breach of the peace. Nay, in the very point of predestination, the puritans and churchmen were not so well agreed as you represent them to have been.

^a Confess. p. 245.

^b See Strype's life of Parker, p. 324, 326, 413.

^c Ibid. p. 412.

For although Calvinism in this point prevailed much in her reign, both in the schools and in the pulpit, yet it was not understood to be *certainly* the sense of the articles, even by those who held *the horrible decrees*.

The prevalence of those vigorous opinions amongst us was owing to the following incidents : The Marian persecution had driven many of our church into exile ; some of these went to Geneva and Zurich. There they imbibed much Calvinism in church government, and discipline, and some rigid opinions in points of doctrine. Not that even all of them were agreed in these opinions : as appears from a petition of many of them to the bishops, requesting that in the future settling the discipline of the church, they shall not subject to ‘ punishments, with Pelagians, Papists, Epicures, and Anabaptists, such men as deny that
‘ any part of mankind are ordained before all
‘ worlds, by force of God’s holy predestination,
‘ to an unavoidable necessity to be damned eternally : unless they affirm and maintain that man,
‘ of his own natural power, is able to will or
‘ work of himself any thing, that should in any
‘ case help or serve towards his own salvation.’^a So afraid were they of the severity of some of their fellow exiles : among which was Laurence Humphreys, before mentioned, who, after having been tinctured with Calvinism at Zurich, was at his return, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, made, by her, president of Magdalene college and queen’s professor of divinity in the university of Oxford ; and so continued till the year 1596. This introduced Calvin’s institutions, as the groundwork of divinity, to the students there. The same institutions were introduced in-

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^a Strype’s Annals, Vol. I. p. 294, 295.

to the other university, if not before, yet, certainly, on T. Cartwright's return from Geneva to Cambridge, in 1578. And from that time, I apprehend, they prevailed more and more, till towards the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign they became the general rudiments of divinity in both universities: for I find Bp. Sanderson saying, (of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, about the year 1608) "It was a good preparative to me (that I say not antidote) for the reading of Calvin's Institutions with more caution, than perhaps (otherwise) I should have done. For that book was commended to me, as it was generally to all young scholars in those times, as the best and perfectest system of divinity; and fittest to be laid as a ground-work in the study of that profession." And with respect to this custom, I think it probable that king James's directions to the university were framed in the year 1616. "That young students in divinity be directed to study such books as be *most agreeable in doctrine and discipline to the church of England*; and incited to bestow their time in the fathers and councils, schoolmen, histories, and controversies; and *not insist too long upon compendiums and abbreviations*, making them the ground of their study in divinity." Such being the rares sown in both universities, together with the better seed, it is no wonder that the former in great measure interrupted the growth of the latter. But that they did not intirely choak the good seed is evident from Hooker's sermons at the temple, where he preached what you now call Arminianism: that predestination was not the *absolute* will of God, but *conditional*: that the doings

• See Hammond's Discourse of God's grace and decrees, p. 9.
 • See Life of Laud, p. 66.

doings of the wicked are not of the will of God *positive*, but only *permissive*: that reprobates are not rejected *but* for the evil works which God did foresee they will commit.* And when his opponent called for his authorities in expounding Paul contrary to the judgement of all churches and all writers; Hooker replied, 'the sentences which he might have cited out of *all* church confessions, together with the best learned monuments of former times, and not the meanest of *our own*, were more in number than perhaps he willingly would have heard of.' Even the maintainers of Calvin's predestination, notwithstanding their prevalence from the causes just assigned, in censuring an anticalvinistical preacher, durst not venture to assert that his opinion was contrary to our articles. For they say, We are fully persuaded, that he hath taught untruth, *IF NOT AGAINST THE ARTICLES*, yet against the religion of our church, publickly received, and always held in her majesty's reign, and maintained in all sermons, disputations, and lectures.† And, in their second admonition to the parliament, p. 43. they acknowledge, 'indeed the book of articles of Christian religion speaketh very dangerously of falling from grace, which is to be reformed, because *it too much inclineth* to their error.' Meaning the error of those who are now called Arminians. So contrary to facts is your assertion, that, through Queen Elizabeth's reign, the episcopal churchmen agreed with the puritans in *doctrine*, and understood the articles in a Calvinistical sense. In a great part of it most of them might: but by no means all.

As little truth is there in what you next advance, that *the parliament of 1572* seems to have
D 3 *thought*

* See his Answer to Travers's Supplication.

† Strype's Life of Whitgift, Append. p. 199.

thought these objections of the puritans (to the episcopal hierarchy and the authority to prescribe and injoin rites and ceremonies) reasonable; and accordingly in the act of that year, injoining subscription, those articles are required to be subscribed, which only concern the confession of the true faith and the sacraments. Now it seems to me just the contrary. That very parliament, in the 13th Eliz. (for the year by you assigned is wrong, whether by mistake or design I know not) in that very act, and in the very paragraph that you quote, shew that they did not think the objections of the puritans against the ecclesiastical hierarchy were reasonable; because they appointed all persons to subscribe before the bishop or guardian of the spiritualities, and to read the bishop's or guardian's testimonial of it in the church. They also made the bishop judge of every minister's testimonials of life and faith; and give bishops, or the ecclesiastical commissioners, power of depriving men for contradicting the articles.

But by the act you observe, *those articles are required to be subscribed, which only concern the confession of the true faith, and the sacraments.* This you would have your readers understand, as if the act required only such of the XXXIX Articles to be subscribed as concerned the confession of the true faith and the sacraments: which is not said in the act, nor could be meant by the words quoted. An act of parliament, especially a penal one, as this is, ought to be very express and clear: otherwise, neither can any man know what it is he is enjoined to do under a penalty, nor can the judge know what offence he is to punish. The act hath plainly express both. As it is necessary for the subscriber

Ibid.

subscriber to know what those articles are *which*
only concern the confession of the true Christian faith,
and the sacrament, in the meaning of the lawgiver
 who requires subscription; the act is careful to
 inform him, by describing them, *as comprised in a*
book imprinted, intituled Articles, whereupon it
 " was agreed by the Archbishops and Bishops of
 " both provinces, and the whole clergy in the
 " convocation holden at London in the year of
 " our Lord God 1562, according to the compu-
 " tation of the church of England, for the
 " avoiding of the diversity of opinions, and for
 " the establishing of consent touching true reli-
 " gion, put forth by the Queen's authority." And
 the judge is as clearly directed whom to punish:
 every person under the degree of a Bishop which doth
 or shall pretend to be a priest or minister of God's
 holy word and sacraments, by reason of any other
 form of institution, consecration or ordering, than
 the form set forth by parliament in the time of the
 late King Edward VIth, or now used in the
 reign of our most gracious sovereign Lady, who shall
 not before the feast of the nativity of Christ next
 following in the presence of the Bishop
 declare his assent and subscribe to all the
 articles of religion as before described; or shall not
 bring from such Bishop, under his seal au-
 thentick, a testimonial of such assent and subscription;
 or shall not openly on some Sunday, in the time of the
 publick service afore-noon, in every church, where,
 by reason of any ecclesiastical living, he ought to at-
 tend, read both the said testimonial, and the said
 articles, on pain of deprivation, and voidance of
 all his ecclesiastical promotions. Here every
 thing is clear, to the minister, and to the ordinary.
 But construe the words in a restrictive sense, as
 meaning to enjoin subscription to some only of

the XXXIX Articles, such as concern the confession of the true faith and the sacraments, in exclusion of those which may be thought to concern discipline, rites, and ceremonies, and the statute becomes uncertain and ineffectual. Which particular articles of the XXXIX are enjoined to be subscribed? or which are they, to which we may refuse subscription? If the statute hath not determined this matter, to whose judgement hath it left the determination? to that of the ordinary, or of the clerk? if it hath authorized neither, as it certainly hath not, of what use or effect can such a law be? yet certainly the legislature intended that it should be of some: and therefore it must be so interpreted, that it may be of some. This case is so clear, that one who labored in this cause before you, the author of *Reflection on a late pamphlet, intituled, Priestcraft in perfection*, who is displeased that the matter in that pamphlet was not carried far enough, acknowledges, 'How many of our XXXIX Articles are struck out by the foregoing comment on the law, cannot be known with that certainty, as if we had the imprinted book of the articles recorded, as our other laws are.' (p. 7.)

In further confirmation that such a distinction was intended in the act, you inform us, that *when Archbishop Parker took upon him to expostulate with some members of the House of commons, for leaving out the rest, he was answered, that they were not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God.*^{*} And for your authority you refer us to Strype's Life of Parker p. 394. You refer us, with your usual ill luck, to an authority that entirely contradicts you, in the very page you mention. He places this conference in the year 1572, in a parliament which began May 8, (which marks it

^{*} Confess. p. 295.

it for that in the 14. Eliz. and so could not concern the act which passed the year before) and makes it relate to one of two bills, in one of which several of the XXXIX Articles were rejected. He says, that on the 20th of May, it was read a third time, and referred to a committee, of which Peter Wentworth, Esq. was one, that the referees thought it was adviseable that some of them should repair to the archbishop with their bills : when the conference in question happened. If this account may be depended upon, the conversation did not relate to the statute which had passed the year before, but to a bill which was preferred by the puritans in 1572, and did not pass, but was thrown out with resentment against the promoters by the Queen, with a command from her Majesty, that no bills concerning religion should be received into that House, unless the same should be first considered and liked by the clergy.¹ Upon which your angry advocate, Peter Wentworth, Esq. employed himself three years in studying a speech for the next session of parliament, so intemperate, that he could not find one of his fellow-members to take his part, or *stay his journey* to the Tower, as he expresses himself; but all judged him worthy of imprisonment there, till the Queen in mercy released him.² It is true, with you his merit is so great for this speech to the archbishop, that you have *knighted* him for it, and multiplied this single petulant puritan into all *the lay part of the legislature at that time*, in your preface to the second edition : but I leave you there to Dr. Rutherford's accurate pen, and procede in my attendance upon you through your seventh chapter.

That

¹ D'Ewes's Journal, p. 213, 214.

² D'Ewes, p. 243, 244.

That a conference in 1572 should relate to an act passed in 1571, would appear something difficult to prove, to a writer of only common abilities: but *persons of active lively spirits, who are not easy under want of employment,* attempt to reconcile contradictions, I suppose, for the exercise of their talents. The Parliament, you say, of 1572 enjoined subscription in the act of that year; and the limitation of that subscription you would prove from a conference with the archbishop in the same year; but, in the next paragraph and note subjoined, you tell us, *Canons, which were not published till after the act was passed, are to be found under the title of Liber quorundam Canonum anno 1571.* And the book informs us that the Synod which made them began the 3d of April, 1571. Now, sir, the difficulty to such ordinary capacities as mine, is, how Canons made to evade an act in 1572, and not published till after the act was passed, could yet be made and published in the year 1571. Ob, *that is,* say you, *according to the ecclesiastical computation.* Your third edition will be very curious, if it can direct us where to find this new *ecclesiastical computation*, which throws the 3d of April, 1571, into the year 1572; or the no less new *civil computation* which brings any part of the 13. Eliz. into the latter of those two years. Till you have done this, I hope your readers, of whose understandings you have shewn so sovereign a contempt, will learn to give you credit in a due proportion to your deservings. If then the conference in question passed in 1572, as you admit, it could not refer to the act 13. Eliz. c. 12. but must belong to another bill about rites and ceremonies, which the Queen did

* Pref. to first Edit. p. 114.

° P. 246. and note.

did not pass; and to this purpose it is related in the very passage to which you send us. So that the authority, whatever it be, of the book to which you refer us, is directly against you; and convicts you of bearing false testimony, in alledging him to prove that the conference was concerning the 13. Eliz. c. 12. in the place mentioned; for he makes it to refer to another bill. Yet, I must acknowledge, that Mr. Strype's authority, honest and diligent as he was, is not sufficient to prove that the conference passed in 1572. For, elsewhere, *Annals*, Vol. II. p. 67, he relates the same conference as passing in the year 1571. We must therefore examine his original, which was Sir Symonds D'Ewes's journals of the House of Lords and House of Commons; which must also be somewhat imperfect, as he complains of the great negligence of Anthony Mason, Esq. then clerk of the House of Lords; and of Fulk Onslow, Esq. then clerk of the House of Commons, for briefly and confusedly setting things down: whose journals, in the years 1571, 1572, he copies, and adds something from an imperfect journal of the House of Commons, taken by some anonymous member of it in the parliament 13. Eliz. Now it does not appear from D'Ewes, that Wentworth was of any committee, except that appointed to consult and deliberate upon matters concerning the Queen of Scots in 1572: or that he was appointed to attend any committee to confer with the Lord of Canterbury his Grace, except on Wednesday the 25th of April, 1571: nor does it certainly appear that any conference was held with his Grace, touching matters of religion, in the year 1572. But by the journal of that year it appears, that on Tuesday

† D'Ewes, p. 137, 158, 155.

day the 20th of May, the bill for rites and ceremonies was read the third time, and referred to be considered by Mr. Treasurer, sir Thomas Scot, Mr. Attorney of the Dutchy, and others.^a Whether Wentworth was one of those others, or not, appears not here. Nor is there any mention made of their attending the bishops, or not. But, on Thursday the 22d of May, the speaker declared to the house her Majesty's pleasure, that from henceforth no bills concerning religion should be preferred or received into this house, unless the same should be first considered and liked by the clergy. And further, that her pleasure is, to see the two last bills read in this house touching rites and ceremonies.^b And on Friday the 23d, Mr. Treasurer signified her Majesty's utter dislike of the first bill, and of him that brought it into the house.^c In Wentworth's angry speech, which he had been three years in brewing and conning over, he censures many offences given by the Queen in the session, 14. Eliz. Among others, he instances in 'a message Mr. Speaker brought the last sessions into the house, that we should not deal in any matters of religion, but first to receive from the bishops.' — 'And I do surely think, before God I speak it, that the bishops were the cause of that doleful message.'^d And then assigns what passed in his conference with the archbishop as the cause; and mentions the words to which you allude, though you have not honesty enough to quote them fairly. He says, indeed, this happened the *last parliament*: which, in accuracy of speech, would imply he meant the parliament 13. Eliz. for what passed in the 14th was only a *session*. But Mr. Wentworth did not always observe this

^a P. 212.

^b P. 214.

^c P. 213.

^d P. 238, 239.

this precision, as Dr. Rutherford hath proved. The question then is, whether Wentworth meant a conference, which, perhaps, passed on May 20, 1572, though not mentioned in the journals, as the cause of the speaker's message from the Queen on the 22d of the same month; or a conference that really did pass in April, 1571, as the cause of a message on another occasion thirteen months after? This must be left to the careful reader's judgement. Only observing, that if it meant the former, the conference *could* have no reference to the Act 13. Eliz. cap. 12.

If the reader thinks the conference in 1571 was meant, it will still be a question, whether the bill A for ministers to be of sound religion, which afterwards passed into an act, was the bill to which the conference referred? On Friday the 6th of April, Mr. Strickland made a motion, that 'we, as the professors of the gospel in other nations did, should publish to the world a confession of faith, recommending the *Reformatio legum*, not to permit, for any cause of policy, or other pretence, any errors in matters of doctrine to continue among us: and therefore . . . the book of Common Prayer, in which are some things inserted more superstitious than in such high matters be tolerable, . . . as the sign of the cross, and such other errors; these things might be changed without note of chopping and changing in religion.' And ended, desiring conference with the Lords of the spirituality for consideration and reformation of these matters.* On the next day, the bill concerning religion was read: what bill is not said. And many others were referred to select committees, among which D'Ewes supposes the bill A was one: but, he says, 'there can

‘ can be no absolute certainty set down hereof.’¹ However, the same day, Mr. Grimston and Mr. Strickland were ordered ‘ to move the Lords of the clergy, to know their pleasure concerning the motions to be made to them tomorrow in the afternoon in matters of religion.’² On Tuesday following, Mr. Mounson reported, that the bishops pray to have the Lords moved by this house to assign a committee to confer with this house . . . about the book for doctrine: (this was doubtless Strickland’s bill.) They met that afternoon in the star chamber. The result of that conference does not appear, except from the journal of the Lords house, that on that day (10th April) ‘ the Lords requested conference with certain of the house of commons, touching a bill brought to them concerning matters of religion; whereupon committees were appointed, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Marquis of Northampton, and others.’ So that this bill was certainly Strickland’s; for there was but *one*, and Strickland had desired this conference on *his*. On Saturday the 14th, Strickland’s bill for reformation of the book of common prayer was read the first time. In the debate upon it, Mr. Treasurer observed, that ‘ if the matters mentioned to be reformed were heretical, then verily they were presently to be condemned; but if they were matters of ceremony, then it behoveth us to refer the same to her Majesty, who hath authority, as chief of the church, to deal herein: and for us to meddle with matters of her prerogative, it were not expedient.’³ After long debate, it was agreed to petition the queen for her licence to proceed

¹ Ibid. 158.

² Ibid. 143.

³ Ibid. 159.

⁴ Ibid. 166.

cede in this bill.* Upon this, in Easter week, which immediately followed, Strickland was required to attend the Privy Council, and to make stay from coming to the house in the mean season.† On Friday in Easter week, the house complained of the detention of one of their members. Mr. Treasurer said, that he was in no sort stayed for any word or speech by him in that place offered; but for the exhibiting a bill into the house against the prerogative of the Queen, which was not to be tolerated.‡ The next day Mr. Strickland repaired again to the house, and he was appointed one of the committee for another bill, for coming to church and receiving the communion, which was read that day for the first time. On Wednesday following, the 25th of April, Wentworth and others were appointed to attend the Lord of Canterbury his Grace, for answer touching matters of religion. If this was in consequence of the committees appointed by the Lords, the 10th of April, as it appears to be, no bill was referred to them but Strickland's bill for a confession of faith, reforming the Common Prayer, and changing some rites and ceremonies, and recommending the *Reformatio legum*: and consequently to this bill, and not the bill A, must the conference, whatever it was, relate. The result was, that on Tuesday the 1st of May, the Lords desired a convenient number of the House of Commons to be sent to them for answer touching articles for religion, and they afterwards returned answer from the Lords, that 'the Queen's Majesty having been
' made privy to the said articles, liketh very
' well of them, and mindeth to publish them,
' and have them executed by the bishops, by direction of her Highness's regal authority of supremacy

* P. 167.

† P. 168.

‡ Ibid. p. 175.

' premacy of the church of England, and not to
 ' have the same dealt in by parliament.'^a On
 which sir Symonds D'Ewes makes this remark;
 ' There were in this parliament much and long a-
 ' gitation touching the reforming several enormities
 ' and ceremonies in matters of religion, which
 ' now at last the Queen took out of the hands of
 ' this house, and promised other amendments.'
 So that the conference was not about the bill A.
 And whatever reformation of rites and ceremonies,
 and new modelling the articles, was intended
 by the Commons, it was now taken out of their
 hands by the Queen, and never passed into an act:
 consequently no limitation of subscription is pro-
 ved to be intended in the act, 13. Eliz. c. 12. He adds
 indeed, although the said matters and agitations
 were not thereupon deferred, but continued in
 part, as is more at large observed on Thursday,
 the 17th of May. He means the seven bills, of
 which A was the first; none of which had been
 referred for conference with the house of Lords,
 and were not affected by the Queen's resolution
 above mentioned.

The bishops therefore had no occasion *artfully*
to evade the moderation of the parliament, by
making certain canons, in consequence of which,
subscription was exacted to all the articles without
exception. The parliament had made no excep-
 tion, and the bishops evidently understood the act
 as intending none. Had they intended any, and
 the bishops been sensible of it, durst these venture
 to make and publish Canons, after the act was
 passed, in open defiance of it? those bishops who
 forbore conference with the commons on Strick-
 land's bill, till authorized by the House of Lords?
 And if, as you say yourself, in the note, they in-
 joined

^a Ibid. p. 180.

joined subscription to all the articles, without exception, *in words which seem to be much the same with the subscription enjoined by the act*; then the act might intend, *by much the same words*, what the canon certainly did intend, subscription to all the articles without exception,

Besides, whatever bill the conference related to, though it was to a bill in which some of our present articles were omitted, yet you have not faithfully given us the reason of that omission, You say, *when archbishop Parker took upon him to expostulate with some of the members of the House of Commons, for leaving out some of the articles, he was answered, that ' they were not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God.'* Whereas your good friend, Peter Wentworth, Esq. does not say, that they rejected them, because not satisfied concerning their agreement with the word of God; but that they rejected them, or left them out, without examining whether they agreed with it, or not. His words are, ' Because we were so occupied in other matters, that we had no time to examine them, how they agreed with the word of God.' You seem ashamed of his reason, and, like a kind friend, but a false witness, endeavour to mend it.

And further, if the words in the act 13. Eliz. c. 12. which contain the supposed limitation, were not inserted by the commons, but afterwards by the lords, as Mr. Beal, clerk of the council, asserts; then the limitation could not be in the bill A, at the time of the conference, the 25th of April; for the commons did not send up that bill to the Lords till the 23d of May.¹

You procede to object, that the puritans opposed canonical subscription *with all their might*;

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Non

¹ D'Ewes, p. 239.

¹ Strype's life of Whitgift, p. 393.

² D'Ewes, p. 149.

None of them refusing to subscribe according to act of parliament: and that it is certain the bishops had then no legal authority to silence, imprison, or deprive, as they did, great numbers of those who refused to subscribe *THEIR* articles.^h The bishops had legal authority (by 13. Eliz.) to silence and deprive those preachers who refused to subscribe the book of articles. That they imprisoned any merely for not subscribing, I do not recollect any instance to prove; and you have produced none. Collins mentions Dering's case, which you probably had in in your head, who was indeed suspended by the archbishop, but restored in 1573 by the privy council, though he professed that he could not subscribe the article of the consecration of bishops and archbishops, nor the article of the homilies. Dering, being only a lecturer, was not obliged by the statute to subscribe *any* articles: but, by the Canons of 1571, he was equally obliged to subscribe *all* the articles, as to subscribe any. And therefore the privy council, even supposing it to have any cognizance of these matters, acted illegally one way or other. This instance, therefore, will rather prove that the privy council did *illegally*, than that the Archbishop did: as the Bishop of Ely scrupled not to tell the Lord-treasurer by letter.ⁱ Your distinction of parliamentary articles and bishops articles is a very dream. It will be a great curiosity, if you will be so kind as to produce a copy of those parliamentary articles. It is strange that the parliament should pass articles distinct from the bishops articles, and never cause them to be published, but still call them Articles, whereupon it was agreed by the archbishops and bishops in convocation: or that no one should ever see or hear of this parliamentary

^h P. 247.

ⁱ Life of Parker, p. 442, 452.

liamentary edition, with the rejected articles *put out, or not put into the book.* So that, instead of the bishops being Ægyptian task-masters, as you represent them,* beating Pharaoh's servants, when the fault was in themselves; the privy council rather resembled the unjust steward, who bid his master's creditor, that owed him *an hundred measures of oil, take his bill and write only fifty.*

If further proof be necessary to make it appear that this act was not *restrictive*, nor excused subscription to the articles, *of the homilies, and of making of bishops and ministers,* I will produce the very witness to whom you appeal, for proof of the contrary. I mean Rogers, in his dedication before his exposition. The sections to which you refer, 34, 35, prove nothing to your purpose, but that the puritans in K. James's time refused to subscribe, because the intention of the church in her articles was changed from what it was before. But look to the very next preceding section, 33; and you will find that, 35 years after passing the act, it was understood to injoin subscription to *all* the articles: and that the *brethren* could never, *in all that time*, prove the exception of any. * Since
 * the statute for uniformity in rites and doctrines was first enacted, more than 35 years
 * have passed; in all which space, neither the *brethren* now being, nor the *brethren* before them
 * living, have hitherto shewn, of the XXXIX
 * Articles, for names and titles, *which*; for number, *how many* the articles be, which ecclesiastical ministers necessarily must, how many
 * which they may nor, or need nor, unless they
 * list, subscribe unto (which I am sure they, or
 * some of them, at one time or other, would
 * have expressed) had the law favoured their recusancy,

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* Confess. p. 248.

' cufancy, and they been able to have juftified their
 ' maxim, which is, that they are not compellable
 ' by fubfcription to approve them all. Again,
 ' fince the firft eftablifhment of that ftatute-law,
 ' the moft reverend fathers, and truly reformed
 ' minifters of this church, . . . according both to
 ' their bounden duties, and (as they are perfuaded)
 ' to the very purport and true intent of the faid
 ' ftatute, have always, both with their mouths ac-
 ' knowledged, and with their pens approved, the
 ' XXXIX Articles of our religion for truths not
 ' to be doubted of Yea, and the *brethren*
 ' too themfelves (which now fo fcrupuloufly, when
 ' they are orderly called thereunto, do hold back
 ' their hands, and will fubfcribe but choicely un-
 ' to fome of them) even they with their mouths
 ' (which is equivalent, and all one) have, and
 ' that according to the ftatute, (or elfe their liv-
 ' ings be void,) upon the firft entrance into all
 ' and fingular their ecclefiaftical benefices, open-
 ' ly both read, and testified their confent to,
 ' the faid articles, for number even *nine and thirty*;
 ' acknowledging them, I fay, *all of them*, to be
 ' agreeable to God's word; whereof the people
 ' in their feveral charges be ready witneffes to
 ' testify fo much before God and the world.' So
 ' that the limitation *pretended*, was never proved,
 ' nor allowed to be the meaning of the act in
 ' 35 years after its paffing.

And when, in 1586, the puritans endeavoured
 to afcertain this point, by preferring a bill and
 book, exprefsly to throw out the 34th, 35th, and
 36th Articles; Sir Christopher Hatton obferved,
 that ' the whole fum of true doctrine was contain-
 ' ed in the XXXIX Articles of religion, fet out
 ' by law 1562, whereof he found, by this bill
 ' and book, three of them wholly condemned or
 ' abrogated.'

' abrogated.' He therefore knew not that they
 had been already abrogated by statute, 13. Eliz.
 or else he thought, that the abrogation of those
 three articles by the statute, had been since abro-
 gated by the Canons of 1584. But the Queen
 cannot be supposed to have intended that, by her
 ratification of these Canons. Especially, as she
 gives as a reason for her rejecting the parliament's
 petition in this case, that 'to make every day new
 ' laws in matters of circumstances and of less mo-
 ' ment, especially concerning religion, were a
 ' means to breed lightness in her subjects, to
 ' nourish an unstay'd humour in them in seeking
 ' still for exchanges. *Malum est et reipublice nox-*
 ' *ium, assuescere homines ad facilitatem mutandarum*
 ' *legum.*' You yourself say elsewhere, (Pref. to
 2d edit. p. xi.) that *no other act hath repealed this,*
or in any wise contravened it, touching subscription to
the articles of religion. But, by the 14. Car. II.
 no person is allowed to preach . . . ' unless—
 ' he shall, in the presence of the same archbishop,
 ' bishop, or guardian, read THE NINE AND
 ' THIRTY articles of religion.' Then, either
 there was no limitation of the XXXIX articles
 in the 13. Eliz. c. 12. intended, or this act
 of Charles II. hath contravened it. And the
 legislature, in this act, certainly understood that
 there was no limitation intended; because in in-
 joining subscription to THE THIRTY NINE articles,
 it describes them as ' the XXXIX articles men-
 ' tioned in the statute of the 13th year of the
 ' late Queen Elizabeth.' Therefore 13. Eliz.
 related to ALL the articles, and not to SOME ONLY.
 And Dean Bridges, who had been a member of
 the convocation in 1571, says expressly, in his *De-*
fence of the government of the church of England,

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that

' Life of Whitgift, p. 260, and Append. p. 110.

that 'the book of articles agreed upon by all the
 'clergy of the church of England,' without any
 limitation or rejection; 'was approved by the
 'high court of parliament, by all the states of
 'the realm, and by the statute commanded to be
 'read.'^m So that if you expect that your inter-
 pretation should be forced upon us in preference
 to that of Queens, parliaments, and convocations,
 you must have found out a new *ecclesiastical au-*
thority, as well as a new *ecclesiastical computation*.
 * The only difficulty is, what your friend Collins
 urges; 'if the word ONLY was not *restrictive* to
 'certain articles, but *declaratory of the matter of*
 'all the articles, all these words, viz. *which con-*
 'cern the confession of the true Christian faith, and

'the sacraments, are perfectly needless, and the
 'clause might have run thus, that the clergy
 'shall subscribe *all the articles of religion com-*
 'prised in a printed book, intituled, *Articles, &c.*'ⁿ
 The inserting those words might be owing to
 reasons which appeared in the debates, of which
 we have no records; but Sir Symonds D'Ewes, in
 his journal, hath preserved enough to justify that
 insertion. In this parliament, attempts were made,
 and bills brought in, for reformation of the book
 of common prayer, rites and ceremonies, and ec-
 clesiastical laws: the Queen expressed her dislike of
 such attempts, as invasions on her prerogative, re-
 stored or granted by an act passed in the first year
 of her reign, as was seen before in Mr. Treasurer's
 arguments against Strickland's bill. They there-
 fore might, in justification of the bill for ministers
 to be of sound religion, describe the book of ar-
 ticles, then by them confirmed, as *concerning*
 ONLY *the confession of the true Christian faith, and*
the sacraments; at the same time checking there-
 by

^m Lib. 15. p. 1277. ⁿ Historical Essay, p. 173.

by the innovators in other matters. Strickland himself mentions ceremonies among errors in matters of doctrine. And in the first framing of them, they are called, *Articles containing the principal grounds of Christian religion (in the which also is to be determined the truth of these things which in this age are called into controversy.)**

All those articles therefore are described as *only concerning the confession of the true Christian faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments*, in opposition to other articles respecting only ceremonies and discipline, whether published or agitated. Surely it is not allowable to construe a doubtful expression in an act of parliament so as to make it contradict itself, and other statutes not repealed: which would be done, if we so construed this clause, as to set aside and reject the 34th, 35th, and 36th articles. The eleventh article being allowed to be enjoined, enjoins also the thirty-fifth, to which it refers for a fuller explication of a most wholesome doctrine, that of justification. The other two cannot be abrogated consistently with the 1. Eliz. c. 2. and 8. Eliz. c. 1. the latter of which enacts as follows; ‘Be it now declared and enacted, by the authority of this present parliament, that the said act and statute made in the first year of the reign of our said sovereign lady the Queen’s Majesty, whereby the said book of common prayer, and the administration of sacraments, with other rites and ceremonies, is authorized and allowed to be used, shall stand, remain good and perfect to all respects and purposes.’—Therefore to set aside the 34th, which alloweth *authority to the church to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies and rites, ordained only by mens authority*, is not to suffer the above

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clause

* Strype’s Annals, vol. I. p. 282.

clause to remain good and perfect to all respects and purposes. And to void the 36th article, would be to contradict the following clause in the said act : ‘ And that such order and form for the consecrating of archbishops and bishops, and for the making of priests, deacons, and ministers, as was set forth in the time of the said late King Edward VI. and authorized by parliament in the 5th and 6th years of the said late king, shall stand and be in full force and effect, and shall from henceforth be used and observed in all places within this realm, and other the Queen’s Majesty’s dominions and countries.’ I therefore conclude, that the words, *Which only concern the confession of the true Christian faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments*, are descriptive of all the articles of religion comprised in a book imprinted, entitled *Articles*, whereupon it was agreed in the year 1562 for the establishing of consent touching true religion, put forth by the Queen’s authority; and intended no other limitation and restriction whatsoever.

At length, in 1604, the puritans refused to subscribe, not only to the hierarchical articles, but to the rest likewise, which they had hitherto approved, under this pretense, that the purpose or intention of the church, if not her doctrine, was somewhat varied (from what it was in time of Queen Elizabeth). And you quote Rogers for the information. From the first of these paragraphs in his dedication, to which you refer, we learn, what you did not care to tell us, that the puritans, (except some rascalous spirits that refused) generally and repeatedly subscribed the hierarchical articles as well as the other. But now, pretending that ‘ the purpose, if not the doctrine, of our church was changed, this,

* this, saith he, was the principal obstacle, why
 * they cannot subscribe unto the book of common
 * prayer, and book of ordination, as earst they
 * (some of them) four times have done
 * and that, might they be assured that the purpose
 * of our church were the same, which it was,
 * they would be prest, and as ready, even four,
 * if not forty times more, to subscribe unto the
 * forementioned book of prayer and of ordina-
 * tion. This proves that the puritans in general
 did not refuse the hierarchical articles, before the
 canons of 1604 were published; and that there-
 fore they did not understand the clause in the 13.
 of Eliz. in a restrictive sense, as excusing them
 from subscribing the XXXVIth article. Yet cer-
 tainly the puritans were the only persons, that
 held themselves excused from subscribing all the
 XXXIX articles: and therefore all persons, except-
 ing a very few, understood the act from the be-
 ginning in the same sense, in which it is common-
 ly understood now.

However, Rogers, you say, *batb acquitted him-
 self of this difficulty* (the charge of the
 church's change of purpose or doctrine)
*by a very dextrous quibble: viz. that the words of
 the articles being still the same, the doctrine, pur-
 pose, and intention of the church must be the same
 likewise. And if the church would not be imposed
 on by this sophism, it was none of his fault.** You
 seem here to warn your readers of a danger that
 the same words may be recommended, in order to
 propagate, under that cover, a different and false
 doctrine. May we not then suspect, that when
 you insist upon keeping to the words of scripture
 only, without any human explication, it is
 possible, that you may mean to convey, under
 cover

* Rogers's 39 Articles, §. 34.

† Confess. p. 249.

cover of the same words, doctrines contrary to them; and, if we will not be imposed upon by this sophism, and give up human explications, it is none of your fault?

Let us next examine the facts on which you inform us, the puritans grounded their suspicion of a change of purpose in the church. The first you mention is, *the regal supremacy, as extended to ecclesiastical matters, and especially in the hands of a woman, which, you say, was an eyesore from the beginning to the puritans, as well as to the papists.* See how well your clients and the papists agreed together in sedition and rebellion! — *This, as you go on, obliged Parker . . . to give . . . to the civil magistrate 'only that prerogative which we see to have been given always, to all GODLY princes, in the holy scriptures, by God himself:'* with this explanation the puritans had reason to be (and probably were) satisfied. When the kings of Israel and Judah interfered with the sacred office of the priesthood, further than they were warranted by the law of Moses, they ceased to be GODLY princes; and, so long as our princes kept themselves within the like bounds, their supremacy was liable to no abuse. Should it prove OTHERWISE, the puritans had no objection to the doctrine of resistance; or the lawfulness of transferring dominion from UNGODLY princes to the PIOUS AND ELECT . . . Bancroft took care to solve this matter in the Canon which enjoined subscription, by adding to the authority of the GODLY kings in scripture, that of the Christian emperors in the primitive church, GODLY or UNGODLY.* For a sophism commend me to a new vamping up of old puritanical casuistry.

And can you, sir, expect to impose upon the world this sense of the XXXVIIth article, that
it's

* Art. 37.

† Confess. p. 249, 250.

it's meaning was to countenance the puritans in *transferring dominion* from any prince whom they were pleased to think UNGODLY, and bestow it on one of their ELECT? or that obedience to the royal supremacy, in all causes ecclesiastical, was a new intention of the church, or of that article, unknown before Bancroft vested King James with it, *by adding to the authority of the GODLY kings in scripture, that of the Christian emperors in the primitive church, GODLY or UNGODLY.*" (Which last words I hope the reader will understand to be your's and not part of the canon.) Or will you take upon you to contradict the canon in this point, and say, that the king of Great Britain hath not the same authority, in matters ecclesiastical, that the Christian emperors had? For it doth not say, what you would make it say, all that 'they claimed and exercised.' Or can you hope, by your decent revival of this old leaven, to persuade our princes to cease requiring subscription to the XXXIX Articles, and tamely to yield up their supremacy to puritanical or presbyterian popes? For such was the modest claim of those whose cause you are now so strenuously defending: Rogers hath truly represented their sentiments in the following passage: 'A true ministry we can never have according to the word, till archbishops and bishops be put down, and all ministers be made equal: the other (a true regiment of the church) will never be brought to pass, till *kings and queens do subject themselves to the church, and submit their sceptres, and throw down their crowns* before the church, AND LICK UP THE DUST OF THE FEET OF THE CHURCH, that is, of the PRESBYTERY.'" May I not now borrow some of your own words? *We will be reasonable:*

■ Ibid.

■ Rogers's Dedication, §. 13.

reasonable: one single passage of the New Testament, proving that kings and queens are to subject themselves to the presbytery, will satisfy us. Nay one single passage in either Testament (for your marginal note requires that addition) from which it may be clearly inferred.* As to the prophecy in Isaiah, chap. xl. the expression in the original is ambiguous. And Le Clerc translates it, as it may fairly be translated, not, *they shall*, but, indefinitely, *men shall*. For indeed the office of a nursing father or mother is very different from the humble submission expressed in these words, and belongs to different persons. And this translation utterly puts an end to your triumph (Pref. p. lix.) Or we may understand the common translation of the respect which heathen powers paid to the Christian Roman empire under Constantine, it's first head; or of the regard shewn by Christian princes, not to any man or number of men, as ministers of the church, beyond their desert, but to the laws of that spiritual society, of which Christ is the sovereign; in whom all due honor, which any of its members receive, finally terminates, as appears from verse 7 of the chapter quoted. This is the exposition of the learned Vitringa, who acknowledges, though he was himself a Presbyterian (yet no English Puritan) that the true completion of the prophecy was evidenced, among others, in Queen Elizabeth's condescending to take the advice of pious and judicious pastors of the church in establishing and defending the faith.† Thus while the pope literally treads upon the necks of kings, and the presbytery expects them, in effect, *to lick up the dust of their feet*, our church, more agreeably to scripture,

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* Pref. to Confess. p. lviii.

† Comm. in Isaiah, Vol. II. p. 597.

in the judgement of an impartial Presbyterian, desires to be respected only so far, as it is subordinate to Christ, and enforces his commands. It gives not to our princes the ministring either of God's word, or of the sacraments ; . . . but it dutifully acknowledges, that they are intitled to rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers.* As to the puritanical interpretation of the prophecy, though you would have it be the episcopal, I heartily return you back your own words : *We have reason to be thankful, that it hath not yet taken place, and that we have no intimation, in the Christian scriptures, that it ever will.*†

The second reason you give, why the puritans concluded that *the purpose and intention, if not the doctrine, of the church had varied from what it had been,*‡ was the refusing to alter the XVIth article, by the addition of the words, *yet neither totally nor finally* ; and to inserting into the book of articles, the nine propositions drawn up at Lambeth by Whitgift. Strange proof ! The puritans not thinking the articles, as then subscribed, Calvinistical enough, desired to add to the XVIth words which intirely destroyed their original meaning : and to insert the nine Lambeth articles, which by the way were not drawn up by Whitgift, but by the puritan Whitacre, in order to explaine the XVIIth to a Calvinistical sense ; without which explanation it would not bear that sense. The puritans desired to change the original doctrine by *altering* the articles and *inserting new ones* : the church of England desired to re-
tain

* Art. xxxvii.

† Confess. p. 249.

‡ Pref. to Confess. p. lix. note.

tain her original doctrines by retaining her old articles. Had she wanted to increase the XXXIX articles by adding IX more, you, who abominate all articles, would have *fulminated* (to use your own word) the severest censures against her. But puritans may do any thing.

At this paragraph I shall consider the greater part of your note, which you subjoin to the next paragraph, as it relates to the last-mentioned fact. Dr. Fothergill had urged this non-acquiescence of the Calvinists in the present set of articles, having this motion of Dr. Reynolds in his eye; the hint of which, you think it probable, he took from Heylin and Montague: here you charge the doctor with *not knowing, or perhaps caring to know, how those writers had been refuted by Carleton, Hickman, and others.*^c As you can have no proof of this charge, the laying it against him must be imputed only to your habitual malignity. Dr. Fothergill was as diligent and as honest a man as any of his time. But you either know not, or care not that others should know much of the writers whom you yourself mention: since you give us neither their arguments nor so much as the titles of their books. Yet you can find fault with others, when, only by a blunder of your own, you imagine they send you on a *random search*. Here you send us on a random search indeed, to receive information from authors whose books you mention not; or even without mentioning author or book: *Carleton, Hickman, and others.* Whom you mean by *others*, if you have any meaning, it is impossible to find out. May we not, as well as you, humbly desire as express directions as we can obtain to the sense and meaning of those authors, with whom

^c P. 253. note.

whom it is our fortune to be concerned.^a Two indeed you are so good as to name, Carleton and Hickman: I suppose you mean Hickman's Animadversions on Heylin, which you quote, p. 255. and which I have not been able to procure. I suppose also that you mean Carleton's *Examination*, &c. which I have seen; but if it convinces any man that the articles are Calvinistical, I am much mistaken. In it are these concessions, that *men may fall away from grace*, exemplified in the parable of the good seed, where many are represented as receiving the grace of vocation, and yet lose it altogether: 'these, he says, are truly said to fall away from grace.' Nay even of the elect (as far as the gospel enables us to judge of them) many may fall without ever rising again. But 'they only stand, and hold out to the end, that are known to God to be such whom he hath called according to his purpose.'^c i. e. those of whom God foreknows that they *will never* fall away totally and finally, they *cannot* fall away totally and finally. Who these are, neither themselves or others know, but God only. So that the doctrine in the XVIth article is true, according to the above two concessions: and Reynolds's addition, if not meant to *alter* the doctrine, though true, makes an useless addition to it. What the article affirms, is practical, and fit to be taught in the church: what he would have inserted, can be of no service to any one, as no one can have the knowledge, which alone can enable him to apply it to himself or any other.

Your next paragraph censures Apb. Bancroft for observing, that *very many, in those days, neglecting*

^a Confess. Pref. to 2d. edit. p. xviii.

^c See *Examination*, chap. v. p. 63, 66, 67. ch. xi. p. 139, 141.

neglecting holiness of life, presumed very much on per-
 sisting in grace; laying all their religion on pre-
 destination; if I shall be saved, I shall be saved.
 Which be termed a desperate doctrine, shewing it to
 be contrary to good divinity, and the true doctrine
 of predestination: wherein we should rather reason
 ascendendo; thus; ' I live in obedience to God, in
 ' love with my neighbour, I follow my vocation, &c.
 ' therefore I trust God hath elected me, and pre-
 ' destinated me to salvation.' Not thus, which is the
 usual course of argument, ' God hath predestinated
 ' me to life; therefore though I sin never so grie-
 ' vously, yet I shall not be damned; for whom he lov-
 ' eth, he loveth to the end.' This learned barangue,
 you say, is rank Arminianism, and a flat contra-
 diction to the XVIIth article, which actually argues,
 as the bishop termed it, descendendo; inferring the
 walking religiously in good works, and attaining to
 everlasting felicity, from previous predestination.
 I think our Saviour's rule, that the tree is known
 by its fruit, is an excellent one. An unknown
 principle cannot be the principle of science. The
 counsel of God, which is secret or unknown to
 us, cannot be a reasonable ground to infer, that,
 in contradiction to his reveled will, which we do
 know, a man that sins grievously shall not be
 damned: but, from a series of effects, we may
 presume to infer the cause. Thus, ' I feel in me
 ' the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying
 ' the works of the flesh, and drawing up my
 ' mind to high and heavenly things: from
 ' thence my faith is confirmed by God's promises,
 ' expressly set forth in holy scripture, that I shall
 ' at length by God's mercy, through Christ, at-
 ' tain everlasting felicity. And as all this flows
 ' from the everlasting purpose of God, whereby
 ' (before

‘ (before the foundations of the world were laid)
 ‘ he hath constantly decreed, by his counsel *secret*
 ‘ to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those
 ‘ whom he hath chosen in Christ, I humbly pre-
 ‘ sume I am of that number.’ In describing pre-
 destination and the effects of it, the article order-
 ly begins with the cause, and proceeds to the ef-
 fects: but then it teaches us from the effects to
 infer the cause. We must feel in our ourselves
 the working of the spirit of Christ, before the
 consideration of our election in him can give us
 comfort. And this reasoning, to which the ar-
 ticle directs us, is, as the archbishop expresses
 it, *ascendendo*; from virtuous habits inferring
 election. And had you read Bp. Carleton you
 might have seen this confirmed by his judgement
 also: who, in the book before-mentioned, p.
 142, 143, speaking of predestination, says, ‘ Of
 ‘ which *he will have us* NO OTHERWISE certain,
 ‘ but *a posteriori*, and by such effects of his spirit,
 ‘ as we may apprehend in our own souls.’ So
 that, if to argue *ascendendo*, be, as you say it is,
 rank Arminianism, Bp. Carleton was an Ar-
 minian, and so was his associate at Dort, Bp.
 Hall, who says, in his sermon on 2 Pet. i. 10,
 ‘ Mark in what order; first our calling, then our
 ‘ election: not beginning with our election first.
 ‘ It were as bold as *absurd* a presumption in vain
 ‘ man, first to begin at heaven, and from thence
 ‘ to descend to earth surely we must *as-*
 ‘ cend only from earth to heaven, by our calling,
 ‘ arguing our election. If we consider of God’s
 ‘ working and proceeding with us, it is one thing;
 ‘ there he first foreknows us, and predestinates
 ‘ us, then he calls us, and justifies us, then he
 ‘ glorifies us. If we consider the order of our
 ‘ apprehending the state wherein we stand with
 ‘ God, there we are first called, then justified,

‘ and thereby come to be assured of our pre-
 ‘ destination and glory. Think not therefore to
 ‘ climb up into heaven, and there to read your
 ‘ names in the book of God’s decree, and there-
 ‘ upon to build the certainty of your calling, be-
 ‘ lieving, persevering; this course is *presumptuous-
 ‘ ly preposterous*: but by the truth of your effectual
 ‘ calling, and true believing, grow up at last to
 ‘ a comfortable assurance of election.’ Hall’s
 Remains, p. 269. Thus, sir, had you been ac-
 quainted with those writers, whom you ignorant-
 ly and rashly charge Dr. Fothergill with neither
 knowing, nor caring to know, you had been better
 informed, and seen, that *we can be no otherwise
 certain, but a posteriori*, that is, *ascendendo*; and
 that the course you recommend, to argue *descen-
 dendo*, is *bold and absurd*, and *presumptuously pre-
 posteros*. And Carleton himself approves of Ban-
 croft’s judgement in this very instance, and agrees
 with him that the doctrine, which you fasten on
 the article, is a desperate doctrine and contrary to
 good divinity; for he says, ‘ What the lord bishop
 ‘ of London did then understand to be a desperate
 ‘ doctrine, I do acknowledge so to be.’ Take
 heed lest the intemperance of your indiscrete rage
 prove, contrary to your design, that the articles
 of the church of England are *rank Arminianism*.

In the latter part of your note, you say, *If the
 very last paragraph (of the XVIIth article) be Ar-
 minian, what will Dr. Fothergill get by shewing
 that he and his brethren subscribe ex animo to con-
 tradictions?*^h It is worthy of your candor to make
 the article contradict, instead of suffering it to
 explaine, itself. A small share of it surely might
 have assisted your understanding here; and incli-
 ned you to believe, that if the very last paragraph
 was

^s Exam, p. 231.

^h Confess. p. 253, note.

was anticalvinistical (for Arminius was not born when it was framed) the former paragraphs were anticalvinistical also. But then you had lost your chief argument and one half of your book.

King James at this period (1611), you say, was no friend to the Arminians.[†] And a little after, He hated the puritans. If King James lived and died an anti-Arminian, and was also all through his reign an anticalvinist, and yet was a strenuous assertor of the book of articles, surely he must understand the doctrine of the church of England to have been that middle opinion which rejects the excesses of each; at least, as he and some others might apprehend them: I mean neither Pelagian in the doctrine of freewill, nor Calvinian in the doctrine of the decrees. This will in some measure account for his behaviour with respect to the synod at Dort: though, I believe, the need he had of the prince of Orange at that time had also its considerable share. In truth, the king and the Presbyterians, in that synod, acted a little unaccountably. The Calvinist-Presbyterians sided with the prince of Orange against the liberties of their country: and the king favored the Presbyterians whom he hated. A conduct perhaps not easily to be explained, but upon this supposition; that the Calvinist-Presbyterians loved revenge more than liberty, and K. James was fonder of power than he was of the church of England.

*He chose six divines to assist at the synod of Dort, who were well known to be zealous Calvinists Three of these he afterwards preferred to bishopricks, viz. Hall, Carleton, and Davenant.** The memorable John Hales of Eton was also amongst them. That these might enter the synod, Calvinists, is not improbable; they had been, as was

F 2

then

[†] Confess. p. 257, 264,

^{*} Confess. p. 263,

then the practice of both our universities trained up in the study of Calvin's Institutions: which, as Dr. Sanderſon ſays, who informs us of this practice, ' might have been much more uſeful to the churches of God, if the honor of his name had not given ſo much reputation to his very errors.' Here we ſee the prejudices of that time in favor of Calvin. So that our divines might have gone Calviniſts to Dort, but certainly returned from it not ſo. Thus it ſared with Hales, who went thither ſo perſuaded, but, as he often told Mr. Farindon, ' at the well preſſing St. John iii. 16. by Episcopius, *there I bid Calvin good night.*'^m Carleton had an high honor and eſteem for the writings of Calvin, as indeed they deſerved, and the courſe of ſtudy at that time was not likely to make him undervalue them. Therefore he ſays, ' If he hath written ſomethings amiſs, as who (writing ſo much) hath not ſlipped in many things? yet a charitable conſtruction would help in many things: and, admit he hath ſomethings which cannot be excuſed, yet if we conſider the ancient fathers, how often they have ſlipped and erred, we might be more moderate in cenſuring of others.'ⁿ And that he thought he erred in point of predeſtination is clear; for he ſays, ' It muſt be confeſſed, that whiſt ſome have ſtrayed too far on the left hand, touching the reſpective decree, that God, for reſpects in men, hath predeſtinated them: others, in zeal to correct this error, have gone ſomewhat too far on the right hand, teaching, that predeſtination is a ſeparation between men and men, as they were found even in the maſs of mankind uncorrupt, before the creation and the fall of man Predeſtination

^l See Hammond's diſcourſe on God's decrees.

^m Golden Remains.

ⁿ Examination, p. 97.

‘ destination doth not look upon the mass of
 ‘ mankind, uncorrupt and innocent, but upon
 ‘ the mass corrupted. These things are set in such
 ‘ evidences of the scriptures, that for my part I
 ‘ know not what can be said to impeach them.’

Yet he had studied Calvin and heard the debates
 at Dort. Calvin holds, that the reprobate are
 passed by, or left to perish, for *no other reason*,
 than because it is his pleasure to exclude them
 from the inheritance decreed to his children.⁹

And that it is not fit to refer the course that leads
 to destruction to any thing else, than the secret
 counsel of God.¹ And that their destruction was
 not only foreknown, but that they were created
 on purpose that they might be damned.¹¹ But the
 English divines at Dort maintained, that God
 damns no one, or decrees him to destruction, but
 from the consideration of his sins.⁷ So that the

F 3

English

• Ibid.

⁹ Quos ergo præterit, reprobat; neque aliâ de causâ,
 nisi quod ab hæreditate, quam filiis suis prædestinat, illos
 vult excludere . . .

¹ . . . Minime consentaneum est præparationem ad interi-
 tum aliò transferre quam ad arcanum consilium Dei. *Institut.*
 lib. iii. cap. 23. §. 1. p. 335.

¹¹ Non modò præcognitum fuisse impiorum interitum,
 sed impios fuisse destinato creatos, ut perirent. In Rom.
 ix. 18.

⁷ Deus neminem damnat, aut damnationi destinat, nisi
 ex consideratione peccati. Theol. Britan. Dordr. Art. I.
 de reprob. Thes. 5. ——— It may not be amiss to observe
 here, that they differed from Calvin also in another point,
 unconnected with this. They were averse from presbytery,
 laboring with the synod to introduce episcopacy; and pre-
 vailed so far, that their best learned answered, ‘ They did
 ‘ much honor and reverence the good order and discipline of
 ‘ the church of England; and with all their hearts would
 ‘ be glad to have it established amongst them, but that could
 ‘ not be hoped for in their state; their hope was, that see-
 ‘ ing they could not doe what they desired, that God would
 ‘ be merciful to them, if they did what they could.’ So
 witnesses Dr. Carleton, at page 219 of his Examination.

English divines, sent by king James to that synod, were not the most rigid Calvinists, or Supralapsarians; Sublapsarians indeed they probably were in the point of predestination, when they went, but not rigid Calvinists. Rigid Calvinism did much prevail in the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign; and I have assigned the reason of it. But if the prevalence of an opinion, at a particular time, is to determine the sense of our articles, they must have been Supralapsarian in the end of Q. Elizabeth's reign; Sublapsarian in K. James's; and Arminian in Charles the first's and ever since. Whereas the truth is, that the Supralapsarian is condemned by the XVIIth article, while the Sublapsarian and the Arminian are consistent with it, and indeed sufficiently with one another; if they would both attend to their mutual concessions, and not charge each other with consequences, which, however justly they may seem to follow, yet are disavowed by the maintainers of the premises. As may be seen in Bp. Hall's *Shaking of the olive-tree*, page 355—388. The remonstrant grants that there is a predestination to life: that the purpose, means, and happy effect of it, are merely the gift of God in Christ.* And so says our article. The contra-remonstrant allows, that God, by his conditionate decree, wills only the faithful to be saved, and only the unbelievers and wicked to be damned.† And so holds our article. The contra-remonstrant admits that

we

* Ad nauseam usque inculcamus nihil ex se aut suis viribus hominem posse: τὰ πῦρ, τὰ μέρα, τὰ ὕδατα, fidei et conversionis gratiæ deberi. Rom. Epist. ad Ext. p. 62.

† Cæterum illud tamen verum est, Deum velle omnes homines salvos fieri voluntate scilicet revelatâ et conditionali, nimirum si velint in Christum credere, et ejus legi servandæ studere, hæc enim voluntate nemo à salute et cognitione veritatis excluditur. Zanchius de prædest. sanct. p. 285.

we cannot be assured of our predestination but by the fruits of it in our lives, as was seen just before; agreeably to our XVIIth article. And that the supposed elect may fall away totally and finally: and that even those who shall be saved may fall away for a time, during which time they cannot be assured of their salvation, though they afterwards will recover again,* agreeably to our XVIth article: And the remonstrants on the other hand deliver it as their opinion, that a man may and ought to be assured of his salvation: that only the grace of God is the supernatural cause of our perseverance, to which we owe both the power and the will to persevere.† Both refer the whole of our salvation to the grace and glory of God, through Christ: both contend, that faith and repentance are necessary to salvation, so that no capable subject can be saved without them: both caution against that divinity of arguing *dēscendendo*, from predestination inferring faith and obedience; but direct us to reason *ascendendo*, from our faith and obedience inferring our predestination: both agree that we should thence entertain a comfortable assurance of salvation, while we continue to produce such fruits: both allow that we may fall from grace received, some totally and finally; and even the elect, so far as to lose that comfortable assurance, though eventually

F 4

they

* *Regeniti et justificati quandoque suo vitio incidunt in atrocita peccata . . . Ita ut dum in eo statu impenitentes persistunt, nec debeant, nec possint aliter sibi persuadere, quam se esse morti obnoxios. Theol. Britan. Dordr. de 5 Art. Thes. 3 de persever.*

† *Hanc nostram esse sententiam profiteamur, hominem de salute æterna certum esse posse et debere: solam Dei gratiam esse perseverantiæ causam supernaturalem, quæ facit, ut voluntas nostra perseverare et possit et velit. Remonstr. Epist. ad Ext. p. 75.*

they recover it again. These moderate bounds, Bp. Hall says, are such as the church of England, guided by the scriptures, hath expressly set, or which on both sides are fully accorded on. Let us then, as he exhorts, quietly enjoy what is true in both (he means the Sublapsarian and Arminian interpretations) and not indiscretely spend our time and pains in distracting people's thoughts with those scholastical disquisitions, whereof the knowledge or ignorance makes nothing to heaven.*

I have passed over, and shall pass over, what fills up many pages of your book, as foreign from your argument, or easily seen through by your readers. You represent Bancroft, very unfairly, as shewing the king only the very last paragraph of the XVIIth article; as authorizing Rogers's Exposition, and as doing contrary to his own sentiments, because he found the king not sufficiently pliable to come into them. You enter into long details about king James, and Abbot, and Grotius, which have no concern with the point in hand. The project of the last, for an union between the Protestants and the church of Rome, was peculiar to himself. It had not the least connection with his Arminian notions. None of the Arminians of his own or the following times adopted or favored it. The famous Arminian professor, Limborch, hath a chapter, in his System of theology, to prove that the pope is antichrist. You labor to have it believed, that the Arminian bishops, in the reigns of James and Charles the first, were inclined to popery. If they were, it could not be their Arminianism that inclined them to it. But, indeed, though I am far from defending all their opinions and practices, either in

* Shaking of the Olive-tree, p. 386.

in ecclesiastical or civil matters, I must say, and it is notorious, that the generality, if not all of them, were zealous enemies to popery. King James acted, in that respect, as he did in all others, agreeably to the maxims of the king-craft, on which he valued himself so much. But his successor neither made any overtures to the church of Rome, nor received any from it by himself or any of his prelates.

You inform us, that King James *imagined whoever was not a friend to episcopal power, must have the same objections to that of kings; and perhaps he was not much mistaken, with respect to his own contemporaries.*¹ From many expressions in the Confessional, a man that should imagine the same *now*, perhaps would not be much mistaken with respect to some of his own contemporaries. However, though these were your dear friends all the way, you admit *the open avowing the lawfulness of resisting* (whom they will please to call *ungodly princes*) *was not very DISCRETE.*² And you intimate, that King James might have seen, though perhaps he did not, how, *what were called* (as you gently word it) *the factious attempts of the puritans were countenanced by the divinity of Calvin.* I wonder therefore, that you are not more *discrete*: and hope your readers will not fail to see, what is pretty visible. Yet I know not how to suspect the bulk of those, who adhere to Calvin's doctrine, or even to his discipline, of drawing such conclusions from either, as you apprehend, but surely without cause, to be connected with them.

*It would not, as you procede to tell us, be so easily comprehended by the people, how they, (meaning the puritans) who were so perfectly right in their divinity, could be so far wrong in their politicks.*³ There was no difficulty of comprehending in this case:

¹ Confess. p. 264.

² P. 265.

³ P. 267.

case : such of the people, who thought the puritans divinity *perfectly right*, agreed with them also in their politicks, for this plain reason, because they were Calvinists. But those of the church of England, who held the doctrines of her XXXIX Articles, condemned both their divinity and their politicks.

You would have us believe, that the members of the church of England were taught the Arminian, instead of the Puritan or Calvinist doctrine, which they had hitherto embraced, with a deliberate design to keep them from embracing the Puritan or Calvinist politicks also. But the old doctrine of the church of England had been very consistent with loyalty ever since the reformation : and what need could there be of changing it, to secure loyalty now ? Any degree of obedience to the civil power may as well be maintained on Calvinist principles, as Arminian. And therefore, those bishops, who wanted to innovate in politicks, could never hope to serve that purpose by innovating in these points too. It must raise very strong prejudices against them, and greatly obstruct their success, as the very suspicion of it did. So that their being at the same time Arminians, and assertors of the absolute power of kings, was merely accidental. And whatever mischief the latter of these doctrines produced in the sequel, you confess, p. 273, that it was taken up by our churchmen, *when they were writing against the popish king-killers*. So that originally it was designed to serve a very laudable purpose ; the consciousness of which might induce even wise and good men to carry it, incautiously, somewhat too far : whereas the notion, which runs into the contrary extreme, sprung from the very dregs of Romish error ;

yet

yet was adopted by your friends, the puritans, who carried it to a greater length than the Jesuits themselves did. For these justified the deposition only of *heretical* kings: but the former, of *all ungodly* ones; a far more extensive appellation. Their successors, I am persuaded, have in general seen the mistake of their predecessors.

You observe, p. 273, that Laud and his two friends, in their recommendation of Montague, represent the council of Trent as faulty, in requiring subscriptions to school opinions; and the church of England as commendable for her moderation in avoiding this: *the reverse of which*, you say, *is the honest truth*:^b for that the articles have decided concerning the school-opinions about predestination, and the council hath not. Now, that the articles have not decided concerning them, I hope I have shewn already: and that the council hath, Laud doth not say; but only in general, that it hath blameably decided scholastick niceties, which is a notorious fact. He must therefore in all reason be understood to mean, that the church of England hath shewed that moderation in this respect, which the council of Trent hath failed to shew in many. It also gives you offence, that *he should talk of her moderation*. Yet persons may be moderate in some cases, who are not so in all. But you are undoubtedly more consistent, who make no pretensions to it in any.

You say, some pages before this, that *King James was not so weak, but that he saw plainly, popery was at no great distance from Arminianism*.^c Now I confess myself so weak, as not to see this: and believe that in the present age very few pretend to see it. I know it was then the popular cry: as many absurdities often have been. But by degrees the world

^b Confess. p. 274.

^c Confess. p. 265.

world grew ashamed of it. Yet you gravely tell us, *The apparent dangers and errors of the church of Rome, were doctrines and practices so founded upon the Arminian side of these school niceties, that the church of England did not think the apparent errors or dangers could be refused (or refuted) without determining these school niceties the other way, which was accordingly done in the XXXIX Articles.*^a Whereas Bishop Carleton assures us, that the church of Rome holds absolute predestination, in opposition to the Arminians: *Restat igitur ut hujus discretionis causa sit voluntas Dei, quæ unum liberat, quia ei placet, alterum non liberat, quia non placet,* Bellarm. lib. 2. *de gratia et libero arbitrio*, cap. 16. So that popery is at least as near to Calvinism as it is to Arminianism: and if the latter may be a back door to it for any to enter at, under the guidance of Franciscans and Jesuits, the former may prove as open an entrance under the convoy of Dominicans and Jansenists. Therefore, if you have no regard for the anticalvinist divines of our church before the restoration, or even for a Stillingfleet, a Sharpe, or a Tillotson, after it, yet at least have mercy upon your friends, Clarke, Hoadly, and Clayton, all whom you must rank in the class of Arminians: yet surely you cannot believe they were inclined to popery.

You ask, *Were the Lambeth articles only debated at Lambeth? or only ready to be published? . . . the Queen's suppression could amount to a very small matter, since it is plain they still continued to have their currency in Cambridge as much as before.*^c They cannot fairly be said to be so much as even ready to be published, being not intended for publick use, only as a temporary and local expedient to procure peace at that time at Cambridge. That the arch-
bishop

^a P. 274, 275.^c P. 276.

bishop did not think the doctrines, censured by those Lambeth propositions, contrary to our articles, is evident from his justifying Barret; whose sermon had occasioned this complaint from the puritanical heads of houses. He tells them, Barret was right in some of the points, which they had forced him to retract; *for the scriptures were plain, that God, by his absolute will, did not hate and reject any man. . . . Neither was it contrary to any article of religion established by authority in this church of England, but rather agreeable thereto.* And when he sent them the Lambeth articles, he expressly tells them, that 'the propositions must so be taken and used, as their PRIVATE JUDGEMENTS: thinking them to be true, and correspondent to the doctrine professed in the church of England, and established by the laws of the land: and NOT as LAWS and DECREES.' Nay the puritans themselves assent to this, by dropping the articles, and appealing to the current divinity at Cambridge: Mr. Barret hath taught untruth, IF NOT AGAINST THE ARTICLES, yet against the religion of our church, publicly received, and alway held in her Majesty's reign, and maintained in all sermons, disputations, and lectures. So that whatever influenced the archbishop to agree to the Lambeth articles, it was plain he was satisfied that some of the doctrines, against which they were levelled, were the doctrines of our XXXIX articles. And that the subject matter of the Lambeth propositions displeased the court, appears from Burleigh's reprimand of the heads of houses: *as good and as ancient*

¹ Strype's life of Whitgift, p. 441.

² Life of Whitgift, p. 462.

³ Strype's life of Whitgift, Append. p. 199.

ancient were of another judgement (from them.) They might punish him (Baro) but it would be for well doing. Such was Burleigh's judgement at that time, and the archbishop himself, for his share in that matter, narrowly escaped being attainted in a premunire.¹ On this discouragement the prosecution against Baro was dropped.

You assert, but bring no proof of it, that K. James sent the Lambeth articles to Dort, and to Ireland.* Pym indeed saith it, in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 647: but on what ground doth he say it, or on what shadow of ground doth he say, that *they were allowed of our state?* when Bp. Davenant saith (Fuller, book 2, p. 190.) that 'the instructions which K. James gave them, at their going to Dort, make little or nothing to the matter of predestination.' You profess to wonder, what, in the opinion of Laud and his friends, amounted to receiving the Synod of Dort by publick authority, if it was not so received here. But may I not, with far more reason, wonder, that so declared an enemy to ecclesiastical impositions as you are, should be for imposing all the doctrinal decisions of that Synod on this nation, merely because the King sent six divines to assist at it, who approved them, and were favorably received by him on their return! If the imposition be such, as serves your present purpose, a very small matter, it seems, will suffice in your opinion to make a law of it. I hope we shall never see so bold a hand intrusted with such work. As to your parallel of the nonreception of the Synod of Dort by us, and of the council of Trent by the French, it will hold good, when we plead the authority of that

¹ Life of Whitgift, p. 473.

* Confess. p. 277.

that Synod on one point, and reject it in another: but not before.

You call the archbishop *the crafty Laud*, for *walking by*, while Bp. Davenant was reprimanded, *without speaking one word.*¹ Craft was not one of Laud's faults: and he had no temptation to shew any in the present case. But even his silence must have the worst interpretation put upon it. The *subscribing with a latitude, or taking particular articles in different senses*, you charge as *an artifice of archbishop Laud's, to open a way for his own Arminian opinions.*^m The facts from which you infer this were, that he had declared to the D. of Buckingham, that some of the points *were curious points, disputed in the schools, and to be left to the liberty of learned men to abound in their own sense*: but that afterwards he obtained a prohibition to preach upon these controverted points. The occasion of his declaration to the D. of Buckingham was to shield Montague from the censure of the House of Commons, who had taken upon them, without consulting with the clergy, and without the concurrence of either of the other two parts of the legislature, to decide points of religion; and on this occasion he might justly urge that it was contrary to Christ's ordinance, that the laity, exclusive of the governors of the church, should determine such points of religion, and contrary to the king's supremacy, and to the share of power, which the Lords spiritual and temporal have by law in our constitution. Nay, you go still further than this yourself, by quoting with approbation what Dr. Sykes saith, that, *supposing the legislature itself, considered as such, were (without a new declaratory law) to intermeddle in determining what is the proper sense and extent*

¹ Confess. p. 278.

^m Confess. p. 280.

extent of the articles, and what shall be judged agreeable or disagreeable to them—this would be determining what they had no right to determine.* Some of the opinions censured, as the declaration procedes, were, such as are expressly the resolved doctrine of the church of England, and those he is bound to maintain: some of them are fit only for the schools, and to be left at more liberty for learned men to abound in their own sense, so they keep themselves peaceable, and distract not the church.† And surely to leave such points, not determined in our articles, to learned men to abound in their own sense, without distracting the people, was just as much in favor of Calvinism as of Arminianism. If, afterwards, he found that learned men would not confine their disputes on these points to the schools, but carried them into the pulpit, distracting the people with them, and therefore got from the King a prohibition of preaching upon these controverted points, it was in exact consistency with his declaration, and just as much against Arminianism as it was against Calvinism. And if, perceiving that the mode of studies in our universities at that time, by reading Calvin's institutions, hung a bias on their minds, he endeavoured to take off that bias, and leave the institutions of the church of England to their literal and grammatical sense, this could not be opening a way to Arminian opinions, unless those opinions appeared to unprejudiced minds the genuine sense of our articles. This might be a prudent method to restore the genuine sense after being rested by misrepresentation: but could never be calculated to introduce one that was a stranger to it. And so far as this sense left room for moderate Calvinists and moderate

* P. 296, 297.

† Cabala, p. 105.

derate Arminians, the latitude was originally in the article, and no artifice of Laud's.

You blame Laud, and the three bishops who joined with him, for intimating the propriety, on this occasion, of following the resolution in the time of Henry the eighth, that, *in case of any difference in the church, the king and the bishops should determine the matter in a national synod.* For, say you, *Who made this difference? these very bishops. And was it not most reasonable, that they should be both judges and parties?* But these bishops did not make the difference; but Montague and his adversaries. And if the bishops had made it, they were but four: and their proposal was, not to have it referred to themselves, but to the whole synod.

You ask, *Had they forgot, that Henry the eighth, passing by the bishops and the national synod, made the universities of Europe judges of a very important point of doctrine?* But let me ask, in my turn, *Would you have had the universities of Europe made judges of the meaning of the articles of the church of England?* Those who followed Laud in contending for a latitude in subscribing, you censure for calling matters in the dispute between the Arminians and the Calvinists, *points of no consequence, which may be held either way, without any detriment to the common faith.*¹ That the moderate opinions of each are so, we have seen to be the opinion of Bp. Hall, (p. 72,) one, who assisted at the synod of Dort, as well as of those who followed Laud.

You say, that no such question, as, *whether the guilt of sin is to be charged on God or the sinner, can be decided without bringing the supreme God into judgement as a party with one of his creatures, and subjecting him to the sentence of another of them.*

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Words

¹ Confess. p. 275.

² P. 282.

¹ Confess. p. 280.

Words highly irreverent : though I hope, and charitably believe, not meant to be so. The scripture indeed hath used the figurative expression, *that thou mightest overcome when thou art judged.* And he invites us to a consideration of his ways, the event of which he foresees. But shall man, upon this, presume to think of literally bringing God into judgement, and subjecting him to his own sentence? and cannot, without doing this, the question be decided, whether the guilt of sin is to be charged on him? We know certainly, *a priori*, that it is not. And though some writers have made shocking approaches towards asserting, that it is, I cannot persuade myself, that they intended to assert it, or even thought it, how immediately soever it may seem to flow from their positions. But if your meaning be, for I confess myself to be at a loss about it, that, whatever men may assert, or whatever they may think they find asserted in scripture, concerning the actions of God towards his creatures, the question ought never to be put, whether it be consistent with his known attributes : I apprehend, on the contrary, that such a question may be well put, though not rashly and contemptuously, yet reverently and considerately ; and where scripture is concerned, with a view to discover whether the passage hath

• Rom. iij. 4.

• Deum non tantum ad damnationem, sed etiam ad causas damnationis prædestinasse quosunque libuit, verum esse cognoscimus. *Beza contra Castell. Artic. de naturâ veri et falsi Dei*, p. 417. — Damus reprobos necessitate peccandi, eoque et pereundi ex hac Dei ordinatione constringi, atque ita constringi ut nequeant non peccare atque perire. *Zanchius de naturâ Dei*, p. 571. — Reprobi ad utrumque hoc malum præcisè prædestinati sunt, ut æternum puniantur et necessario peccent ; et quidem ideo peccant quo justè puniri possint. *Piscator, Resp. ad duplic. Vortii part. p. 220.*

not some other meaning, which ought to be preferred. For though St. Paul silences the petulant objector with a reproof, Rom. ix. 19, 20. yet in the same epistle, iii. 5, 6. he allows a different sort of person to ask, *Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?* and answers calmly, *God forbid:* for then how shall God judge the world? In these words he plainly alludes to those of Abraham: *That the righteous should be as the wicked that be far from thee: shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* Gen. xviii. 25. seemingly a bold expostulation; but one, which God knew to proceed from an humble heart anxious for his glory. With the like spirit, we may allowably make the like inquiry. And when we make it concerning any text of scripture, we do not first admit, that God hath acted in such or such a manner, and then question, whether it was just, or good, or wise to act so: we only examine, whether the appearance, that such an action would be contrary to those attributes, is not strong enough, to put us on seeking for another interpretation of the place.

But whatever your meaning may be, how do you draw any consequence from it to the point in hand? You say, *If occasion is taken for such disputes, from articles of religion of human device, and if in particular such a dispute may be raised from the express terms of our own articles, should not a serious and considerate man be cautious how he subscribes to them? would it not be inexcusably rash to take it for granted that they contain matter of no consequence?* But do our articles give more occasion for such disputes, than scripture doth? You say that the scriptures *rightly understood* give no just occasion for any such controversy. This implies that they

G 2

may

may be *wrongly understood*; and when they are so, give occasion to these disputes. Our articles, built on these scriptures, may also be *wrongly understood*. Yet neither scripture nor the articles give just occasion for them. Doubtless all persons ought to be cautious what they subscribe: but none ought to be immoderately so. And have they, who do not understand the articles in a sense which makes God the author of sin, need to be cautious how they subscribe? or have not their adversaries? Surely our clergy cannot be blamed, who conceive that the compilers, to prevent despair or licentiousness of living, have determined against the Supralapsarians, that there is no secret decree of God which hath *fated* some men to sin, and esteems the sins of others as *none*; whereby he would become the author of sin to both. Upon the whole then, should not a serious and considerate man be cautious how he needlessly wrests the articles to a contrary sense, insisting that they are rigid Calvinism. As to your concluding question, it was never imagined by any one, that the articles contained matters of no consequence: but that many of the disputes raised upon them are of none, may be easily seen.

Another thing, you tell us, which draws in subscribers of the present age is, that, whereas Arminianism was heretofore esteemed to be the back door to popery and arbitrary power, that notion has, upon examination, been found to be utterly groundless. This plea also you think a false one, though there needs very little examination to find out the truth of it. What connection have God's predestination, Christ's death, free-will, and grace, the manner of the workings of grace, or the perseverance of believers, with popery and arbitrary power?

Tindal

Tindal saith, there is none between either of the two last, and the five Arminian points condemned at Dort. And you answer, that he did not so much as know what those five points were. But can you shew, that the real five points are more connected with popery and arbitrary power, than those which he took for the five? If not, it is needless to enquire whether his account of them be accurate. You go on to say, that the Calvinists, too certainly inferred the lawfulness of resisting wicked princes from their principles of election and grace. But are we to believe the certainty of this inference on your bare word? for you attempt no proof of it. Why may not a person, who is not one of the elect, be intitled to a crown, as well as to an inferior magistracy, or to an estate? Or can he, according to Calvinistical principles, be intitled to none of these, that the saints may possess both the kingdom and the earth? Be so good as to speak out, and tell us also, how you will know the elect from other men; or whether every one may reprobate whom he pleases? Calvin doth not say, that the *doctrine*, contrary to that of *resisting unrighteous princes*, is *civil idolatry*: much less doth he infer the lawfulness of resisting them from his principles of election and grace: nor doth Heylin represent him as doing it,* but you misrepresent Heylin. Grotius, I doubt not, asserted that the Dutch Arminians had great *reverence for the civil power*: and so they ought. But I can no more believe, that he said *infinite reverence*, than I can that the *English Arminians went still further*, though I conceive that they went too far. But on what did they build this more than infinite reverence? why, they first *excluded election from any share in the foundation of dominion*.

G 3

And

* See History of Presbyterians, p. 21, 22.

And so, I believe, did every sober man in the nation. And why should their reverence of the civil power be too great on that account? Oh, but they *substituted indefeasible hereditary right, jure divino, in its place.* And if they did, was that part of their Arminianism? In which of the five points is it contained? And how can you for shame slip this tenet in, as an Arminian one, to serve your purpose, though you know, that the Dutch Arminians never held it, and that, for a century past, the Arminians of the church of England have had no higher an opinion of it, than the Calvinists of the church of England?

But you say, that, by means of this doctrine, *resistance, even to a Nero or a Caligula, became a damnable sin.* But why by means of this doctrine? St. Paul, who probably had never heard of it, pronounces resistance to Nero a damnable sin; which you might have done well, on this occasion, to remember. But was St. Paul therefore a friend to arbitrary power? No, he leaves all men, when injured and oppressed, to the remedy which their civil constitutions afford. Even under a Nero, a Roman uncondemned was not to be beaten; and, if beaten, was intitled to redress against the magistrate: and the falsely accused might remove his cause from a prejudiced judge and appeal unto Cæsar. Yet compliance with the laws was a gospel duty, either by an active obedience or a passive submission: *if I have committed anything worthy of death* (he means not in his own private judgement but in the judgement of the law) *I refuse not to die.* The case of a prince's invading fundamental laws and abdicating, he had

had no call to determine, and was too wise to do it needlessly. But you know, it seems, some worthy persons, who think that resistance, even to wicked princes, cannot be justified without recourse to the theology of the puritans. Now, if they mean, that resistance to all wicked princes cannot be justified without it; I would only add, nor with it neither. But if they mean, that resistance to such a one, as I have just described, cannot; it is really too much, after expecting us to take your own word for every thing that you say, to expect we should take that of your friends also. But suppose Arminians in any place should happen to be, what the principles of their sect can never make them, abettors of arbitrary power, to argue from thence that they were *popishly* inclined, is a most absurd inference. Will the friends to such a power in their prince, subject him to the controul of a superior potentate? Perhaps it may be said, distressed princes may be glad to compound with his holiness for *some* power, against rebellious subjects who would grant him *none*. Let such rebellious subjects consider this, who, from their principles of election and grace, endeavour to drive their princes into this distress. As to Charles the first, all his injuries from the Calvinists could not drive him into popery, although his queen was assiduous to intice him to it. ‘I bless God’ (said he, to Apb. Usher, when about to receive the Lord’s supper) ‘that, in the midst of these publick distractions, I have still liberty to communicate . . . may I so receive comfort by the blessed sacrament, as I do intend the establishment of the true reformed protestant religion, as it stood in its beauty in the happy days of Queen Elizabeth, without connivance at popery.’² And the same

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historian

² Rapin, fol. ed. vol. II. p. 490.

historian allows that he was undoubtedly very zealous for the protestant religion, as professed in the church of England. And I as readily allow that he was no Calvinist. App. Laud is as undeservedly represented by you, as at least leaning to popery. Spare your virulent reproaches on this head, at least till you have obliged the world with as able and rational a defence of protestantism, and as effectual an overthrow of popery, as that prelate hath done, in a book which, Bp. Burnet says, is *one of the two best books we yet have.*^a

But still the poor Arminians, you are resolved, must and shall be inclined to popery. For *indulgences*, the very part of popery which set Luther on opposing the rest, were founded on the merit of good works; and that again on free-will; and, what is more, were so founded [I suppose you mean, the merit of good works was so founded] by St. Paul's own reasoning: *To him that worketh is the reward, not of grace, but of debt.*^b But St. Paul doth not name free-will here. How then doth he found the merit of good works upon it? Nor doth he name merit, but only debt: which may, by stipulation, be due without merit. Nor doth he mean, that to every one, who works, a reward is a debt due. Our Saviour hath decided the contrary, Luke xvii. 7—10. Besides, all Christians, whether you allow them free-will or not, perform and ought to perform good works: yet, you will not say, that all or any of them merit by these. Nor do the Arminians themselves say it, but condemn the papists for saying it, and no wonder. But even if merit were possible, I cannot see that purgatory, saint worship and indulgences must follow: nor do you add a word to prove it; but content yourself with affirming, for the entire satisfaction of all
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^a Pref. to Exposit. p. iv.

^b Confess. p. 286.

the world, that *they who will take the pains to read Montague's appeal* — will easily discern that *their apprehensions were not groundless.** Is not this adventurously said by one who had told us, but a few pages before, that he *had not Montague's appeal*, and only *supposed* his doctrines?† This is a new invention in the art of controversy, very commendable for some writers; a device to prove what you please, without being at the trouble of consulting books: it is but *supposing* the authors of them to say what you would have them say, and then boldly appealing to their authority. Like you, I have not Montague. But I will venture to affirm, that, in Heylin's introduction to the life of Laud, the other work quoted by you, nothing can be found to justify those apprehensions of the puritans, which you mention.

In the note to your next paragraph you ask pardon for having cited from memory in your last edition, and correct your mistake in this. Your ingenuoufness deserves commendation; and I shall be glad to see all your mistakes acknowledged and corrected in your next edition. In the same paragraph, in defence of Calvinism, you say, *When it is considered, that so able a writer as Dr. Clayton, the late Bp. of Clogher, could find no other way of establishing the free-will and free-agency of man, but by putting such limitations as he has done upon the prescience of God, no reasonable man would hastily conclude, that the Calvinists have nothing material to say for themselves.*‡ But how could a writer of Dr. Clayton's abilities presume to put limitations upon any of God's attributes? Why it seems it was, that he might establish the free-will and free-agency of man. If so, I fear your former argument will prove the Bp. of Clogher to be a rank papist; and that, by opening a door to free-

* Ibid. p. 287.

† P. 272.

‡ P. 288.

free-agency, he hath opened a gap to let purgatory, saint worship, and indulgencies, break in upon us. Alas ! that good and conscientious Arian subscribers should fall under such suspicion ! Nay, the very principles of protestantism, as laid down by you, by this method of argumentation, will be found to lead directly to popery : for they, leaving private Christians at liberty, and restoring them to the privilege of working out their own salvation by their own understandings and endeavours, establish their free-agency ; and free-agency introducing in train, purgatory, saint worship and indulgencies, protestant principles must end in popery : But then, luckily enough, if you procede but one step further, we shall find popery must end in protestantism again. For, as you have drawn out the pedigree, *free-will* begets *merit*, *merit* begets *indulgencies*, and *indulgencies* beget the *opposition of Luther* : So we go round and round, according to your state of the case, in a *necessary* circle, which it is impossible to prevent ; protestants must become papists, and papists must become protestants. What a clear system is here of free-agency ? and *what reasonable man can now conclude, that the Calvinists have nothing to say for themselves ?* But what if, after all, these Arminian doctrines, which are to make all men, who embrace them, papists, are not, by your own confession, settled points, even amongst the papists themselves ? You not only quote Grotius, who saith, that the school opinions disputed in Holland, which you tell us were the same with those disputed in England, had not been decided by the church of Rome, but you add your own authority to his. You acknowledge that the Janсениsts,

See Confess. p. 1, 2. See p. 286, 287.

P. 274.

and you might have added many others of the church of Rome, hold, in the main, the Calvinistical opinions. Only you would have us think, that if Jansenius's book had not been condemned, as it was in 1653, *his followers in the next generation, if they adhered to his opinions, would have left the church.*¹ Now, if they adhered to his opinions, they could not be less likely to leave their church for the condemnation of his book. Yet they have adhered to them, and not left their church, for more than a whole century : and no men have more strenuously endeavoured to make converts from protestantism. So that Calvinists may be full as good keepers of the back door of popery as Arminians.

Surely then, upon the whole, if you will reflect with any coolness, you must see abundant cause to retract your accusation ; and not labor any longer to revive an obsolete clamor, in opposition to scripture, common sense, and fact, merely to pay your court to the almost extinct race of old puritans.

But whether Arminianism leads to popery, or not, the deniers of free-agency, it seems, have much to say against the truth of it, as three great philosophers, Hartley, Thournsayer and Gay have shewn.^k As you rest the matter here, I shall leave you in possession of whatever weight their names may carry with them, without opposing any others to them, but only desiring every one to consult his own breast on the subject.

You go on now to say, that *those old worthies, the puritans, had good reason to expect the return of popery from the whole conduct of Laud and his friends.*^l If you do not blush at having written this ;

¹ P. 290, 291.

^k P. 287, note.

^l Confess. p. 289.

this ; all your friends, who see it, and have read or heard of the character of that prelate's conference with Fisher, will blush for you. He had his faults ; and, besides his political errors, and the general error of the age, intolerance, another was, that in the church he loved pomp too well : but if his writings are not able to vindicate him from the charge of inclining to popery, if his successful conduct in reclaiming persons from that church will not sufficiently prove his averfeness from popery, even the author of the Confessional can have no pretence to escape suspicion. For, that he hath written as good a book against it, and made as many converts from it, I never heard. And therefore unless he can make that appear, let him take shame to himself for this scandalous and groundless abuse.

And though these were seasonably stopped in their career — that is, by chopping off the Archbishop's head, &c. — Good-natured soul! — Yes — the church of England has been, and still is, though by degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, edging back once more towards popery. You admit this is a fact which vulgar eyes cannot perceive but by the authority of your testimony. I have the misfortune to have these vulgar eyes, also, and having, with great astonishment all the way, arrived at your 289th page, cannot be induced to believe any thing upon your bare affirmation. And your own eyes appear to me to be no clearer than those of the vulgar ; indeed something more disordered, from the instances produced by you in proof of this assertion, in your preface ; which, upon examination, prove gross misconceptions in yourself. That the church hath lost its security, in a great measure, against popery, and

all heresy and error, I acknowledge : yet not by holding different opinions in the article of predestination, which you think *must have happened at all events*, though men had been ever so candid, capable, and upright, throughout,* but from that poisonous sophistry, introduced in 1712, of subscribing the articles in the subscribers sense and not in that of the imposers. By which artifice, the employers of it have so undermined the Christian faith in the compass of about 50 years, that they begin to take heart, and conceive hopes, that they *may possibly live to see the way they have been preparing, gradually opening to the accomplishment of their wishes.* And that this may lead as well to popery as to Arianism, your own method of argumentation will prove: for if one man can bring himself to assent to and subscribe the articles in an Arian sense, I would desire to know what security the church hath that another doth not put a Roman Catholic sense upon those articles which concern transubstantiation and purgatory? And if Anticalvinism be sufficient to justify a suspicion of inclining to popery, the contriver of Arian subscription, Dr. Clarke, as well as his principal followers, and your good friends, are exposed to the same suspicion, for they were all Anticalvinists. So that the great and alarming increase of popery, in these kingdoms, may be thought by your own principles of reasoning, to be owing in good measure to Arian subscribers and the encouragers of it.

You tell us, *Dr. Stebbing was obliged to lower his high church notions to battle the Papists.* This was not the point to be proved : and yet even this point you have not proved, only affirmed. The point

* Note at p. 288.

* Confess. pref. p. xx.

* P. 293.

* Note at p. 298.

point to be proved was, that anticalvinistical notions were favorable to popery. Hath the doctor been obliged to lower any of *these* to battle it? That *the clergy of the church of England hath constantly disclaimed all connexion with popery, or any design or disposition to promote that cause, you say, is but an equivocal proof of a different spirit.* This indeed, sir, is no equivocal proof of your spirit. It must surely strike every candid person with horror, to find so many thousands of reputable men, through successive generations, suspected by you of gross hypocrisy and villainy, and this suspicion published to the world, on such frivolous pretences as you have alledged. God grant you to repent of this dreadful uncharitableness, and forgive you!

In proof, indeed, of our *edging to popery*, you refer any one, *who is desirous to see these apprehensions verified in particular instances, to a pamphlet written by Dr. Du Moulin, some time History-professor in Oxford, printed in 1680.* I have not been able to get a sight of this book. But if those advances were visible in 1680, they have certainly not been carried on since; for, if they had, they must in above 80 years more have brought us remarkably near to each other: whereas, on the contrary, you acknowledge, that, even now, vulgar eyes are unable to discern the approach. And therefore, if, in Dr. Du Moulin's time, the church of England had been edging towards the church of Rome, it must, since that, have been edging back again. However, his *last words* were published in the year you mention, and are a retraction of all the personal reflections he had made on several divines of the church of England, Dr. Stillingfleet, Durell, Patrick, and others. We usually give most credit

credit to the words of dying persons, acknowledging, and repenting of the injuries they have done. *His last words*, therefore, I recommend to your perusal; and God grant you may make a proper use of them! They are to be found in page 11. As for my books, in which I mixed many personal reflections, I am now sensible I vented too much of my own passion and bitterness; and therefore disclaim all that is personal in them; and am heartily sorry for every thing I have written to the defaming any person. I humbly beg God, and all those whom I have wronged, pardon, for Jesus Christ his sake, and am resolved, if God spare my life, never to meddle more with such personal things: and do earnestly exhort all people, as a dying man, that they will study more love and mutual forbearance in their differences; and will avoid all bitter and uncharitable reflections on one another's persons. And as I earnestly pray those worthy men of the church of England to have charity and tenderness for the dissenters from them; so I beg of the dissenters that they would have a due regard and respect to those of the church of England: of many of whom I say now, Let my soul be with theirs! And that all true protestants among us may heartily unite and concur in the defence and preservation of the holy reformed religion, now by the mercy of God settled among us. And that men of all sides may, according to St. Paul's rule, cease to bite and devour one another, lest we be destroyed one of another; and that whereunto we have already attained; we may walk by the same rule; hoping that if any man is otherwise minded, in some lesser things, God shall either revele that to them, or mercifully forgive it, through
 Jesus

' Jesus Christ ; into whose hands I commend my
 ' spirit, and desire to appear before God, in and
 ' through him, who gave himself for me ; and
 ' therefore do now study to learn of him, to be
 ' meek and lowly in heart, and to love all the
 ' brethren, as he hath loved me. This in sin-
 ' cerity of heart I sign, *from Boston 1 Novbr*
 October 5, 1680. Lewis du Moulin.

The publisher of the pamphlet adds, p. 15,
 ' Would to God that they who still persist in
 ' their invectives, and have since this doctor's
 ' death published, under his name, an addition-
 ' al *Account of the church of England's advances*
 ' towards popery, without the knowledge of his
 ' wife and other relations, would be pleased to con-
 ' sider this narrative ?'

*The third inducement our modern subscribers have
 to plead, is, that the doctrinal articles concerning
 grace, free-will, predestination, &c. are susceptible
 of an Arminian sense Archbp. Laud, as
 we have seen, was the earliest patron of this device.*
 That these articles are susceptible of a sense, that is,
 what you call, Arminianism, is certain ; because the
 compilers meant to warn people against a predesti-
 nation which was contrary to conditional pro-
 mises, not to ascribe their damnation to God, but
 to their own fault ; and so to accord grace and
 free-will as not to maintain either to the denial of
 the other. This appears by a summary of doc-
 trines, published by them about 8 years before the
 articles came out ; and from the *Reformatio Le-*
gum, drawn up in the same year. Archbp. Laud
 therefore was not the earliest patron of this de-
 vice, of encouraging those doctrines under the
 authority of our articles, but our first reformers ;
 Nor was he the earliest or any patron of the *double*
sense ;
 P. 293.

sense; because he always contended for the *one* sense, which was Anticalvinistical and Antipelagian; and, to recover that sense, which had been in some measure obscured by prejudices drawn from studying Calvin too much, he recommended the plain literal sense of the articles, in which you allow (p. 298.) no refuge can be found for *various* senses. You therefore needlessly disquiet yourself about the mysterious behaviour of our contending clergy; who, you think, to be consistent, should take just their opposite parts. But those, whom you compliment with the character of the *more rational* part of the English clergy, (although from other of your accounts *not the best*), and who are the most strenuous advocates for a latitude in subscribing, may, without any inconsistency, vilify the memory of Laud, who was no patron of their hypocrisy. And the others may zealously contend against a double sense, without lessening their esteem for his learning and piety (however they may differ from him in political principles), for he contended against the double sense as zealously as themselves. I mean not that the articles were drawn up so against Fatalism, as not also to condemn the excesses of Pelagius. I all along insist that both were condemned. If there be a Calvinism that admits of conditional promises; (Art. 17.) universal redemption by Christ's death; (Art. 31.) and possibility of falling from grace given; (Art. 16.) such Calvinism is consistent with our articles; and if there be an Arminianism now, which gives the potter power over his clay; asserting the sovereignty of God; his decrees to life according to his good pleasure; and the necessity of grace to restore the will to its freedom, and supply us with the means of salvation; (Art. 17.) such Arminianism is also consistent with our articles. Betwixt

the extremes which are condemned, nice questions may exercise the subtleties of the schools, which our articles meddle not with. Their purpose is to recommend such a reconciliation of grace and free-will, God's decrees and his general promises, as may teach us to avoid despair and unclean living; and influence us to 'follow in our doings' 'that will of God expressly declared to us in the' 'word of God.'

But Dr. Sykes hath so effectually confuted the pretense of the articles being anticalvinistical, that it is not likely that it will ever be revived any more." You sent us before to Montague's Appeal for a proof, from a *supposal* only of what was in it. Perhaps Dr. Sykes's effectual confutation rests upon a *like supposal*. Had you produced his effectual confutation, I would have endeavoured to answer it. But you have not attempted any confutation at all of this third plea, though you have built a great part of your book on the supposition of it's falshood; as if you hoped to force upon your reader the belief of your assertion by the dint of repeting it. And I cannot be expected to enter into a particular examination of every piece, to which you may be pleased to give a general recommendation in a few lines, as decisive in your favor. You admit it probable, that at first he did not see, that the articles were *evidently Calvinistical*.^u And how came he to see this afterwards? Is it because Bp. Burnet thinks it evident that 'the' 'articles were made by men, who were thoroughly' 'in St. Austin's scheme, and that they meant' 'to express that?'^x If universal redemption is not included in St. Austin's scheme, then his scheme is not the doctrine of our church: (Art. 31.) If it is, both St. Austin and our church hold differently from the Calvinists. And if, in this point, both

^u P. 294.^w P. 297.^x P. 295.

both Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians are rejected by our articles, they are *evidently anticalvinistical*. But Heylin tells us, says Dr. Sykes, (in his Reply, p. 42.) that ‘in Queen Elizabeth’s reign all the Calvinian rigors in matters of predestination, and the points depending thereon, were received as the established doctrines of the church of England.’ And they were so by many, perhaps by most, at the latter end of her reign. But Strype, in his life of Whitgift, p. 435, saith, that, till about the year 1595, *Calvin’s way of explaining the divine decrees was not entertained by many learned men in the university of Cambridge*. And when it came to be received by more, were not those, who received it, opposed, as holding contrary to the established doctrines? and did not they themselves betray their consciousness of it, by framing the Lambeth propositions, in order to construe our articles to Calvinism, which appeared to them to *want* such a commodious explanation? To this indeed Dr. Sykes thinks the answer not difficult. And his answer is, that ‘the Lambeth articles were drawn up to stop the mouths of the anticalvinists . . . to press upon mens minds and consciences the tenets of a *faction*; and, under the name and pretence of quietness, to subdue mens minds to slavish dependence upon authority. The *old* articles were not *rigid enough* for these ends, and therefore *new* ones, *more rigid*, were devised.’ So that notwithstanding Dr. Sykes’s *effectual confutations*, the articles are less rigid than Calvinism, by his own concession.

You condemn Dr. Sykes, and I, sir, will not acquit him, for subscribing articles in an Arminian sense, which he deemed to be originally Calvinistical, merely on the authority of King Charles’s declaration. For you say, *The declaration supposes the articles to be drawn up in general*

words, which favor no side : allow that the articles were originally drawn up to favor one side, and what use can you make of the declaration? This is fairly urged against him, who thought the articles were Calvinistical, and yet subscribed them in an Arminian sense : but is no censure on those who think the *articles* were drawn up, not to favor either side against the other, only to point out and condemn the errors of both : and that the *Declaration* was published to allay the animosities in being before, under different names, of rigid Calvinists and Arminians, which rose from errors ; and to unite them in the profession of the same scripture truths, which the one or the other of them held, and which are expressed in the articles : at the same time engaging them mutually to bear with one another in nice and curious points, not determined in them. So that although men of different opinions in these nice and undetermined points might subscribe the articles ; yet the Declaration gave no refuge to *various senses* in the words of the articles.

You say, *For my part, I cannot but think, that an honest man must have some struggles with himself, before he can bring himself to give a sense to words, which he knows they were never meant to bear ; and especially when those words are the words of a covenant, importing some kind of security given to the publick, by assenting to them.*² The reader perhaps may wonder, that you would trust this observation with him, which he cannot fail to apply where you scarce intended it. Such struggles are aggravations of guilt in men, who persist in reaping the fruits of their prevarication, and in disturbing, by falshood and malice, the peace of a community, which they gave a fallacious security to maintain. But the reader is mistaken if

¹ P. 298.

² Confess. p. 298.

if he construes this passage as an ingenuous confession and sign of remorse : he will find it but the preface to further malice, in an endeavour to blacken the character of that good and conscientious prelate, Bp. Sanderson.

For this purpose you say, *It is certain that some very good and worthy men, by virtue of a certain sort of casuistry, have reconciled themselves to this practice* (of giving a sense of words which they know they were never meant to bear) *to avoid some present inconveniences grievous to flesh and blood.*^a

But Dr. Sanderson submitted to those inconveniences so grievous to flesh and blood, and chose rather to lose his preferments than violate his conscience. What then was his offence ? a long detail is subjoined, to which I refer the reader ; but shall collect the substance of it, as follows :

The puritans, by opposing the attempts of their adversaries with spirit and vigor, got the upper hand. What were those attempts ? why, requiring people, who approved the articles, to understand and subscribe them in their literal sense. And what was the spirited and vigorous opposition made against them ? why, seizing on people's properties ; murdering men of all ranks ; subverting the constitution in church and state ; and usurping the government. And what a spirit must he be of, who can cover, with such gentle words and seeming satisfaction, the horrors of a civil war, and approve of the desolations of his country !

When they had thus gotten the upper hand, they imposed their *Covenant and Engagement* to be taken. He himself took neither ; but honestly sacrificed his temporal interest to preserve his conscience. An integrity that reflects so much upon your conduct, that he must not expect forgive-

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^a Ibid.

^b P. 299.

ness at your hands. However, it seems he had an indulgent casuistry for others, though he took not the benefit of it to himself. For although he had determined that all the salvos for taking the *Covenant* were jesuitical, or hypocrisy; yet being consulted about taking the *Engagement* he determines thus: ‘Where *one* construction binds
 ‘to *more*, *another* to *less*, the true sense is to
 ‘be fixed by the intention of the imposer.’^c—‘If
 ‘the sense of the imposer be not so fully declared
 ‘by the words and the nature of the business,
 ‘but that the same words may, in fair construction, be still capable of a double meaning . . .
 ‘I conceive it is not necessary . . . to demand
 ‘of the imposer whether of the two is the meaning? . . but he,’ the person required to make the engagement, ‘may make his just advantage of
 ‘that ambiguity, and take it in the sense that
 ‘shall bind him to the *less*.’^d You admit that *some arguments follow, tending to prove, that this latter was more probably the sense of the imposers, than the other; which, you say, can be looked upon in no better light than of an attempt to insult the common sense of all mankind.* After which, you ask, Did Dr. Sanderson really think that the powers then in being were such fools and triflers, as probably to intend to put no other but his lower sense upon the engagement, or indeed to allow that sense at all? And you answer for him, that he did not think so, because he desired no copies of his paper should get abroad,
 ‘lest the potent party, in consideration of some
 ‘things therein hinted, might think the words
 ‘of the engagement *too light*, and might thence
 ‘take occasion to lay some heavier obligation upon the royalists, in words that would oblige
 ‘to *more*.’ The imposers themselves might, some

^c P. 303.^d P. 308.^e P. 305.^f P. 309.

Some of them, mean to bind men to more, and some to less : and it neither was necessary, nor might be possible to know, which they intended. Or they might wish men to bind themselves to more, and yet not think them guilty of prevarication, if they bound themselves only to less. The arguments produced by Sanderfon to prove, that the imposers meant to bind only to the less, are not contemptible, as would have been seen, had you been fair enough to have laid them before the reader : but you thought it more for your purpose to condemn them by an arbitrary sentence than suffer them to be examined. However, considerable as his reasons were, Sanderfon never declares that he thought them to outweigh, but only saith, *'Weighing my'* (probably it should be *waving any*) *'positive conclusion touching the lawfulness or unlawfulness of subscribing in universali, I shall declare my opinion only in these particulars : 1. That it is not lawful to take the engagement with a resolution to break it. 2. That whoever thinks the words of it contain a promise of any thing not lawful, he cannot take it. 3. That whoever understands them to oblige him to any thing contrary to his allegiance, cannot take it. 4. That if any man, for any temporal benefit, take it with a doubting conscience, he sinneth. 5. That if any man, after a serious desire of informing himself, what are the duties of his allegiance, and what is probably the meaning intended by the words of the engagement, shall find himself satisfied, that the performance of it is no way contrary to his allegiance, so long as he is under such force that he cannot exercise it ; and that when that force is removed the obligation of the engagement expires ; and, rather than suffer extreme prejudice, shall subscribe the engagement, since his own heart condemneth him*

'not ; neither will I.' This casuistry surely deserves much better treatment than you have given it : though had the casuist leaned a little to the favorable side, since it was not for his own interest, but from compassion to his suffering friends, it had been, in the judgement of charity, an excusable fault. And the liberty he gave, little as it was, was more than he would take himself. That he was unwilling his papers should get abroad, proves only that he knew not, and he never pretended to know, what construction the potent party would fix on the engagement ; not that he knew, or believed, they would fix on the higher and stronger. And who, that had suffered so much, from the injuries of those violent robbers, as he had done, would not endeavour to be safe from *the spirit and vigor* of such men, however gratefully they may relish to your palate ? All indeed were not so inhuman to him and his memory, as you and your favorites have been : for when he and his family were in distressed circumstances from the iniquities of the times which you applaud, the great and good Mr. Boyle was so sensible of the worth and value of his casuistry, after he had written those cases of conscience which you scoff at, that he allowed him a pension of 50 pounds a year to proceed in those studies. And it is certain his *venerable character hath descended with much estimation, even to the present times.*

After this hard treatment of Bp. Sanderson, grieving that so much precious scandal should be confined to his person, you endeavour again to sprinkle it upon the whole clergy of the church of England, saying, *I am heartily sorry that I cannot derive the practice of our subscribing the XXXIX Articles,*

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with a latitude, *from a more respectable origin, than these foregoing precedents.*^a Meaning the solemn league and covenant and the engagement.—But what have they to do with the XXXIX articles? or what authority can Bp. Sanderfon's opinion, that if any man, for any temporal benefit, take the one with a doubting conscience, he sinneth, give to an Arian to subscribe the articles with a latitude which he knows was not intended? the earliest avowed precedent of this kind was the casuistry of Dr. Sam. Clarke in 1712, which, you acknowledge brought you to give a security of this kind to the church and to the publick, either without a previous examination, to what the nature and circumstances of so solemn an act do in reality amount; or with a resolution to act contrary to your engagement. The subscribing with a latitude, in points not determined in the article, is as old as the articles themselves.

In your last chapter you make
 CHAP. VIII. your inference from the foregoing account of things, and conclude, *that in this matter of subscription, at least, a reformation is devoutly to be wished.*^a It may be so; and the more devoutly it is done, the better. But who are the men, who are to wish it? according to your representation, the laity are unconcerned in this matter of subscription; for you say, *our XXXIX Articles are of no significance to the laity;*^b the most exceptionable part in your opinion, and for the sake of which you wish all subscription abolished, is a point, as you affirm, by which *the well-being of society is not at all affected,*^c and about which you are apt to think few of the common people

^a P. 314.^b Compare Confess. p. 206, 207, & 315.^c Confess. p. 317.^d P. 121.^e P. 357.

people form any ideas.^d As little reason have you to expect, that the clergy should wish a reformation in this matter of subscription; I mean still upon your representation : for you range them only into three classes, none of which can, consistently, wish for it with any great earnestness; and one at least not at all. Some of them you charge with such a total ignorance and indifference as neither to examine or care what they subscribe so that they can get preferment :^e another class, under the Bps. Burnet, and Clayton, the doctors Clarke, Sykes, and others, suppose men of different opinions may very well acquiesce in subscription as it is.^f The third, under such writers as Bp. Conybeare, and the doctors Nicholls, Bennet, Waterland, Stebbing, &c. neither allow the expedience of such reformation, nor would have endured any proposals of that kind without a strenuous opposition.^g If then the church of England be composed of such materials, as you have described them to be, of a laity that is unconcerned in subscription, a clergy who care not about it, or think a reformation in the matter useless or inexpedient, where are we to find any devoutly to wish it but some person who classes with neither, and is a church to himself; or conscientious men of different persuasions,^h not members of our church, but who, hankering after its emoluments, devoutly wish this bar of subscription removed, which was placed on purpose to keep them out?

However, sir, as your representations of things are not always true, possibly there may be some, even of the church of England, who would allow of a reformation in this particular. The laity, I verily believe, are not so totally indifferent

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^d P. 358.

^e Ibid.

^f P. 43, 87.

^g P. 318.

^h P. 317.

as you would, on some occasions, make them. Though not obliged to subscribe our articles, they know themselves concerned in them ; as they are to be taught and join in worship with those who are to instruct them, according to those articles, in a liturgy formed on those doctrines : They therefore must judge for themselves, whether they can communicate with a church which holds such doctrines. Among the clergy, the proportion of those who have not examined these things, which proportion neither you nor I know, I would charitably hope and believe not to be so great as you would have us believe it to be ; and I am willing to persuade myself they are few more than the younger clergy, who, long used to take their masters and their tutors instructions for granted, and having generally found them afterwards to be well grounded, suppose the same of their spiritual directors in this case, and subscribe from a full persuasion that the articles are agreeable to the word of God : and, till they shall find otherwise, their subscription is a guide to them what to preach, and a security to the church that they shall not teach contrary doctrines. Before examination, indeed, they cannot be supposed to wish for a reformation : but after it, they pass over to one or other of the two classes mentioned by you, and are to be found, either among those who, deluded by the commodious casuistry of your friends, Clayton, Clarke, Sykes, and others, acquiesce in the unlimited latitude of subscription in which they have indulged them ; yet even these, however inconsistently, as you acknowledge it to be, do *confess* the want of a reformation in this matter and *call for it* : or else they think, with Bp. Conybeare, and the doctors Nicholls, Benner, Waterland,

Waterland, Stebbing, and others, that our articles are true, and may be usefully required to be subscribed by the clergy. These doctors indeed you say, *neither allow the expedience of a reformation in the matter of subscription, nor would have endured any proposals of that kind without a strenuous opposition.** Now, however satisfied these may have been with subscription to our present articles, it doth not appear, though you accuse them of it, either that they did not allow the expedience of a reformation of the articles, or that they would have opposed it. I have already had occasion to shew the contrary, with respect to Dr. Stebbing.¹ And the author of *the historical essay on the articles* hath shewn it of Bennet (Pref. p. 7.) and very disingenuously abused him for it. And probably every one of those you have mentioned, would have owned, that some of the articles now are unnecessary, and others unhappily expressed, at least you have no right to deny this of them, having no evidence to support such denial. To what alterations they would have consented, or their successors would consent now, you have no title to ask, till you have plainly said what alterations you require. If you answer that you desire none, but that all articles be disused, which is the truth, surely you have written the former part of your book only to shew your rancor. For what doth it signify to dispute, whether our articles ought to be subscribed, or in *what sense*, and whether they have been *honestly* subscribed, if no articles at all ought to be subscribed, or receive the assent of candidates for orders? It is idle to talk of reforming a thing which ought not to be suffered to be in any shape or degree.

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* Ibid.

¹ Second Letter, p. 96.

You next procede to examine the force of the arguments against a reformation drawn from the impracticability of it; taking along with us the concession that a reformation is expedient and desirable.^a The concession we have freely made you, though your own malicious and inconsistent representation of persons would rather seem to prove the contrary. But here again you are skipping from a reformation of the articles, by not requiring assent to some of them, and wording others somewhat differently, to reformation in general, of which the reformation of the articles is a very small part. The reformation of them, indeed, and of other things, which you and many others would make, may be very large; and may afford a good reason against moving for alterations, which, though desirable, are not necessary. Some persons may be for altering the words in question much farther than we can approve, others would take occasion from one alteration to propose many more on very different subjects. You yourself have given us fair warning of this, in your preface, p. xiv; and you certainly do not mean less than you say. The like warning of what you aim at you give us in this chapter; *A reformation that should reach to the extent of our deviations from the scriptures (and when the door is once opened who knows how far a reformation might extend?) would not stop at a few liturgical forms and ceremonies. The conductors of it might probably procede to enquire, how far the present polity of the church stood upon a scriptural foundation? and should such enquiry be pursued to good effect, the consequence might be, that the repose of some great churchmen would be grievously disturbed, their labors increased, the nature and tendency of their present occupations*

^a Confess. p. 318.

tions greatly altered, and their temporalities reduced to a due proportion to their duties and services.^a

And, if the functions and abuses are so intimately incorporated, that there is no separating them, may there not be other functions found out, which would equally answer the end of an effectual reformation?^o

So that it is not your desire, that a few small changes should be made, though you would perhaps sometimes have it thought so, in order to accuse us of obstinately opposing all. But proposals for small changes may introduce great ones. You have endeavoured indeed to persuade us, that some changes are necessary: we only think that some may be expedient. And you have omitted another head, whether attempting any, under our present circumstances, be prudent: which we must not fail to consider.

With respect to a reformation in general, (into an harangue on which, by a sleight in the art of controversy, you have let yourself, though you set out only on a reformation in the matter of subscription) you are pleased to allow, that the bishops, and other pious and learned divines, who, by the course of their education and studies, and their intercourse with clergymen of all capacities and dispositions, may well be supposed to have the clearest conception, both of what is amiss, and of the most effectual methods to bring the things into order, are the proper persons by whom a reformation in our ecclesiastical affairs should be first attempted.^p What hath put you into so particularly good a mood as to allow the bishops and other pious and learned divines to have so great a capacity of being useful, when the tendency of your book is to reject all use of them? I will not charge you here with inconsistency; it suffices to say, the allowance is made only, on this occasion, on purpose to load

^a Confess. p. 361.

^o Note at p. 362.

^p Ibid.

load them with undeserved reproaches; which design, indeed, runs through your whole performance, and, if it be carried in memory, all your inconsistencies will be found reconcileable with it.

To this effect, you say, as the only apology for their not attempting amendments, that *perhaps there may be some doubt made, whether my lords the bishops would succede in applying to the crown for the powers necessary for such an undertaking, or to the legislature for their authorizing such a reform.* And then you ask, *Have our bishops and great churchmen ever made the trial? have they been disappointed in the event of it?* Both these you venture to answer in the negative; because *a witness, worthy of all credit, had been credibly informed, that his majesty (King George II.) bath sometimes said to a late great prelate, 'Is there any thing, my lord, you would have me do for the church of England? if there is let me know it.' Upon this fact, say you, I rest the evidence, that no application bath been made to the throne, on the subject of reforming the church of England; and that, if our bishops had applied, their petition would not have been rejected.*^a Here, sir, besides your wandering from reformation of articles, to reformation in other things, you would prove, that *no application had been ever made to the throne on the subject of reforming the church of England* (during what time you do not specify) because none such was made in consequence of words said to be spoken by King George II. to a late great prelate, in what part of his reign doth not appear. But many applications had been made before, without success, from the earliest times of the reformation: particularly

^a Confess. p. 319, 320.

ticularly in relation to manners and ecclesiastical discipline; which are not contemptible points. How far you had them in your thoughts on this occasion, or whether you imagine, that the late King's gracious offer was designed to extend to them, I cannot say. Our church from its early days hath acknowledged and complained of the want of a reformation, and wished the godly discipline of the primitive church might be restored; but the bishops and great churchmen were not able to do it at that time, when, though the good and pious King Edward was well disposed, yet the general disposition was such, that Dr. Cox expressed it thus to Bullinger in 1552, 'We hate those bitter institutions of Christian discipline. We would be sons, yea heirs, but we abhor the rod.' And he prayed Bullinger, that he would, by his letters, stir up the great men and nobles to take particular care about this discipline. And do you think the great men and nobles are more ready to kiss the rod now, than they were at that time? The *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum* could not get passed in King Henry the eighth's, or Edward the sixth's, or Queen Elizabeth's days, when attempted in their respective reigns, though two of those princes seemed to encourage it. As little success had the Calvinist's plan in Charles the second's time, though in that part of it, which respected parochial discipline, they had the concurrence of the bishops and great men of the church of England. 'The first part, the parochial discipline,' say they in their MS petition now in my hands, 'is necessary to the honor of the Christian profession, to the integrity of worship, to the destruction of impiety and vice.'

* Strype's Mem. Vol. II. p. 366.

* Belonging to the library of New College in Oxford.

‘ vice, to the preservation of the sound, the
 ‘ raising them that are fallen, the comforting
 ‘ of the penitent, the strengthening of the weak,
 ‘ the purity, order, strength, and beauty of our
 ‘ church, the unity of believers, and the pleasing
 ‘ of Christ, who hath required it, by his laws :
 ‘ it is agreeable to the ancient canons and practice
 ‘ of the churches, and is consented to by our
 ‘ reverend brethren, and so is no matter of con-
 ‘ troversy now between us.’ Our bishops and
 great churchmen therefore have repeatedly at-
 tempted a further reformation, and concurred
 with their presbyterian brethren in their attempt
 to introduce a stricter discipline, which might
 prevent, or correct and restrain, that degeneracy
 of manners so complained of, but all without
 success.

Nor had they ground to hope for more under
 George the second. In the principal points of
 faith and worship the bishops and clergy wanted
 no alterations : you and your friends that do,
 may apply for them when you think fit ; but have
 no right to expect, that we should do your work
 for you against our own judgements. In smaller
 matters and circumstantial many harmless and
 useful changes might have been, and now may be,
 proposed. But it did not appear, that either dis-
 senters or churchmen, or the people, or the par-
 liament, wished to have them brought on ; or
 that those who did, would have been contented
 with them. The king had probably no one of
 these projects in his thoughts : but only a general
 indeterminate intention of offering to do any
 thing which might benefit or please the clergy,
 whether with respect to any part of their income,
 or otherwise, without inconvenience to his go-
 vernment. Mr. White, it seems, was credibly
 I informed,

informed, that he *sometimes* asked a great prelate, if he would have him do any thing for the church. I have made inquiry, but never could hear that he asked it more than *once*, in the height of good humor and gratitude, at the end of the rebellion in 1746. Therefore I conceive that, in this particular, Mr. White either was misinformed or mistook his informer. Now the sincerest kind intentions, that could be expressed on such an occasion, would naturally subside a little afterwards. And if the king expressed them more than once, it is not said, that he expressed them to more than one bishop; or that this bishop communicated them to the rest, at least as a ground-work to build schemes upon, for any great alterations. He and they might know by applications made before, or then, to the king or his chief ministers, or from their acquaintance with the fixed sentiments of either or both, that the interpretation of his gracious assurances must not be carried so far, as to expect support for proposals that would create disputes and animosities to little or no good purpose: a suspicion which statesmen are very apt to entertain of all ecclesiastical innovations, and easily find the means of infusing into their sovereigns. You *have rested the evidence*, therefore, that the bishops have made no application to the throne for reformation of the church, and that, if they had made any, it would not have been rejected, on a hear-say fact, much too weak to bear the stress of it. And it is a certain truth, that, since the time you mention, an offer was made, both privately to the King's ministers, and publickly in the address of the convocation to the King, that the synod would be ready to enter into business, whenever it should be thought proper. Had they indeed entered in-

to business, it is probable, that it would not have been *only* the business, or *all* the business, which you want to have done : but you must not expect them to proceed according to your private judgment instead of their own. However, they were told it was not thought proper, that they should act at present. Wherefore, sir, by your own sentence, they are intitled to a discharge from the reproach you have undeservedly cast upon them. For you pronounce, *Let the churchmen of the establishment shew themselves desirous of, and sincere in, soliciting a reformation of our ecclesiastical constitution ; and if they miscarry in their endeavours, it is but equitable that the impracticability should no longer be put to their account.*"

As you insist, that the civil government is favorably disposed to a present attempt of reforming the church ; so you will not allow *the patrons of the present ecclesiastical system to put the impracticability of a reformation upon the people, or to say that the temper and manners of our people are not in a condition to be reformed.*" For to this end, you say, Mr. White had described the gross body of the people in terms, which, with the addition of one or two epithets, would perfectly characterize the inhabitants of a Pandemonium : and that this description is agreeable to the sentiments of some of our great churchmen ; for Mr. White wrote *permissu superiorum*, and had his pamphlet supervised by them : and that he dressed up this scarecrow to deter a certain lay-assembly from taking matters of reformation out of the hands of the clergy into their own." Do you then believe that this indisposition towards being reformed is not real in the people, but only a scarecrow and false

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* Confess. p. 358.

* Confess. p. 320.

* Confess. p. 320—324.

representation? so you seem indeed to think, in order to abuse the bishops for pretending an indisposition without any foundation for it. Yet when you want again to abuse them for being discouraged at such indisposition, as peculiar to the present, and unknown to former, times, you acknowledge that such indisposition is not feigned or pretended, but does, and always did, exist. *The prejudices, tempers, and constitutions of men, are known to be much oftner, and in much greater abundance, on the side of folly, falsehood, and vice, than of truth, virtue, and good sense.* — But — these in fact had in them, in our Saviour's days, the very same perverseness and obliquity, of which we complain at this hour.* Thus, sir, you, whatever our great churchmen do, concur with Mr. White in his sentiments of the people. As to his writing *permissu superiorum*, and having his pamphlet revised by them, of which you lay broad hints appear; you mention only, that he 'confesses he omitted some things by the advice of those, whose judgement he greatly reverences, and cannot allow himself in any thing to differ from.' — That he had 'conferred upon the subject of alterations, with a person in high station.' — And that in another place, he says, 'I am satisfied we shall not stand with the dissenters for half a dozen indifferent things and ceremonies.' Here is not the least hint that he wrote *permissu superiorum*; and yet less, if possible, that they supervised his pamphlet. In dressing up the scarecrow, you are equally concerned with Mr. White. Your design in doing it you best know: Mr. White's you cannot know to have been such as you uncharitably and boldly charge him with. Both your accounts lay the indisposition to reform

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* P. 338, 339.

elsewhere than on the clergy, who have often attempted a reformation, in which they were not permitted to succede.

The clergy however must not be let off so easily; for you say, *Is it not natural to ask, how came our countrymen into this degenerate state? — does not the representation carry with it some reflection on those who should have taught them better? and who should these be, but the appointed teachers of religion? the bishops and pastors of the church, who receive some millions annually for their watching for the souls of the people and instilling into them Christian knowledge, and Christian principles?* The author of the Confessional, sir, will answer you; who tells us, *The plain truth is just this. The prejudices tempers, constitutions, &c. of mankind, with respect to the expedients of reformation proposed in the Christian scriptures, have been much the same in all ages, since the heavenly preacher of them first appeared. Sensual, worldly-minded, and incorrigible men bated him, because he reprov'd their pride, their avarice, their hypocrisy, and other vices, without reserve. And such men bate such preachers to this hour, and will bate them to the end of the world. And yet such doctrines must be preached, with the same unreserved freedom, if the men who are appointed to this office would discharge it faithfully.* If the indisposition in the people to a reformation made them hate our Saviour for attempting it, and is much the same in all ages, the present indisposition then is not to be imputed to the negligence of the clergy. And this indisposition, from whatever cause it may arise, being by you acknowledged, the impracticability of a reformation by the present powers in the bishops and pastors, follows in consequence. You say, the

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Christian

* P. 323.

* P. 347, 348.

Christian doctrines must yet be preached with unreserved freedom: the Christian doctrines are still preached, and will be so, unless your scheme takes place: and they are inculcated, though indeed by no means so diligently as you and I could wish, yet far more diligently than they are attended to. When you invidiously complain, that the clergy of this nation receive some millions annually for instructing the people, you assert a notorious fallhood; and if the good effect hoped for from their appointment be not such as we desire, the legislature assigns a cause very opposite to yours, that *'divers mean and stipendiary preachers'* rendered such by lay-impropriators, who receive the tithes originally given to the clergy, *'depending, for their necessary maintenance, upon the good-will and liking of their bearers, are under the temptation of suiting their doctrines and teaching to the humors, rather than the good, of their bearers.'* 2. and 3. Annæ. Precept and example are all that we can oppose to the evils complained of: and where either of these is negligently wanting, we are certainly greatly to blame. And I would to God that we did all of us duly consider how big with ruin such neglect is to ourselves and our flocks! that we would lay to heart the word of the Lord to Ezekiel, *When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest them not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.** More power to reform we have not, nor do you wish we should: the miraculous powers, which accompanied the apostles endeavours, are not vouchsafed to us, nor can the antient discipline, which our church wishes

* Chap. iii. 18.

wishes to restore, be exercised in a national church without the consent of the civil magistrate. Let us conscientiously plant and water, and trust to God to give the increase. If we faithfully discharge the watchman's part in giving warning, though the wicked, who will not turn from his wickedness, shall die in his iniquity, we shall deliver our own souls.

But you are angry with Mr. White for telling us, that *this very people, capricious, seditious, headstrong, &c.* as he has represented them, have some respect for their spiritual guides and governours; and sense enough, with all their weakness, ignorance, and want of judgement, to perceive that those who are led by their office to think continually on those things which concern religion, are more likely to judge rightly of them, than any lay-assembly whatever.^b Had you been as attentive to your argument, as you are to reproach, you would have thanked Mr. White for this concession, rather than have made it a new occasion of scandal. For the point, on which you set out, was to prove, that a reformation was not so impracticable as Mr. White represented it; saying, 'The people were never less disposed than at this time to acquiesce in the wisdom, and submit themselves to the decisions, of the superiors.'^c And here he acknowledges, that, 'headstrong as they were, they have some respect for their spiritual guides.' Yet, certainly, the people may be too void of respect for their ecclesiastical superiors, to permit them to influence them to the due amendment of their lives, and, notwithstanding, may have some respect for them, and more than for their lay-superiors, in religious matters, for the reasons assigned by Mr. White in the above passage; to

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which

^b P. 323.^c Confess. p. 320.

which you have yourself assented, in allowing the bishops, and other pious and learned divines, by the course of their education and studies, to have the clearest conception both of what is amiss, and of the most effectual methods to bring things into order.* But as you supposed this greater ability in the bishops, out of no good will to them, but to draw the more odium upon them for not doing what they were so well qualified to have done; so, instead of making the most of this concession of Mr. White, in support of your point, you are better pleased to turn it into a new occasion of censure on the clergy, in this manner :

*Will it not be said, that the clergy may perhaps foment this spirit of faction and independence, towards their lay superiors, the better to secure the dependence of this headstrong multitude upon themselves?** Another insinuation of groundless malice. The clergy were never so free from every thing of this kind, as they are at present. But neither let your opinion, or mine, preclude the reader from judging for himself. Let his own experience and observation inform him, whether your insinuations against the clergy, at this time, have any apparent grounds : let those insinuations acquaint him, from an attentive consideration of your book, what is the view of its author. If the clergy have no other means in their power to reform the manners of mankind, than the Christian doctrines, and their own examples directed by those doctrines ; what opinion must your readers entertain of one, who endeavours to destroy the certainty of those doctrines, by allowing every heterodox opinion the same authority ; and misrepresents those examples by unsupported suspicions and false assertions ? and may a serious at-

tention

* P. 318.

* Confess. p. 325;

tention to the spirit which guided you in this work, lead you to make a proper atonement, and prevent that prospect of discomfort, which must otherwise open to you, at that awful period, when every man's final account shall be called for.¹

You seem indeed to think, that nothing can increase the licentious spirit of the people, but the negligence of the pastors:² yet, hath not even civil liberty this bad effect *incidentally*, by means of party contentions; and all their dreadful consequences? hath not luxury the same *directly*, the close concomitant of wealth? hath not neglect of domestick education and example, multiplying incentives to expence, dissipation, and debauchery, disuse and scorn of attending religious instruction, invectives in print and conversation against the clergy, infidel books and talk? do not all these things abound amongst us far more than they did in former days, and increase continually? and still can you discover no source of national corruption, but from the faults of your brethren the clergy? and what sort of brotherly disposition towards them is this? Indeed, are not the faults of the clergy themselves often owing in a great measure to some of the laity, who countenance, favor, and prefer, such of them, as cannot perhaps be legally rejected, yet have by no means the proper spirit for gospel ministers? and none perhaps are louder, than such patrons and recommenders, in their invectives against the evil, to which they so largely contribute. But without dwelling on this point, is it not evident, that our present bad state, in respect of religion and morals, and the difficulty of making it better, may arise from many causes, which have little or no connection with any misbehaviour of the clergy? Have not

¹ Pref. p. iii.

² P. 326.

all nations grown worse and worse, nearly in proportion as they came to be in circumstances like ours? did not the Romans grow worse and worse, till they could bear neither their diseases nor the remedies of them? Good Mr. White suspected, and we have still more reason to suspect, that our case is approaching towards this. Yet remedies must always be tried; and Christian remedies, if allowed to operate, would be effectual. But even the best of them must be administered with prudence: and no rash, doubtful, dangerous methods pursued; much less any, which are likely to make bad worse. Yours, we fear, are such: and therefore cannot admit them without strict examination. But let proposals for real amendment be made with visible good intention, and we consent to be reproached if we are indifferent about them.

Mr. White had argued the imprudence of attempting alterations in the liturgy, &c. from the bad dispositions of the times. You think the nature of the times no defence of the clergy, p. 326. And certainly it can never defend them, however it may possibly in some degree excuse them, in any thing, which they do amiss. But surely it is a good plea, against their attempting what the times will not bear, what will do harm instead of good. From Mr. White you digress, intirely wide of your professed purpose, to the ancient fathers, and from thence to Mr. John Hales's opinion of them and of church authority. Excuse me from following you in this flight. At length, you get back from Mr. Hales on church authority to the first clause of the XXth article of the church of England. And here again I am ready to attend you, as that clause is related to your book, though not to this part of it.

Mr,

Mr. Hales, in his treatise of schism, printed about 1636, speaking of church-authority, saith *it is none*. And being blamed for this and other things in that treatise, he blames himself in a letter to Abp. Laud for saying in such general terms that *it is none*: but adds, that, *if in point of decision of church questions he said it was none, he knew no adversary that he had, the church of Rome only excepted*. On this you ask, *Could Hales have said this, and to such a man as Laud, if he might have been confronted with an authentick book of articles?*^h And, certainly, though he doth not make, in his treatise of schism, the least reference to the XXth article, yet his words prove that he then either did not believe, or did not remember, the now first clause of that article to be a part of it, or that, if he did, he at that time dissented from it. I add this last alternative, as a possible one, because, in the same treatise, he strongly contradicts the answer of the church catechism concerning the inward part of the Lord's supper, though without naming it. Yet he undoubtedly knew that to be genuine. But whether a man, so immersed in deeper studies, was acquainted with the different editions of the articles or not, he certainly might have been confronted by an authentick book of articles, which had the clause; Wolf's Latin edition of them, printed by the Queen's printer, with the Queen's authority, in 1563, immediately after they had passed in convocation. He might have known also, that the clause was in *many* of the printed books of articles then in use: for there were several editions of the English articles, with the clause, printed within little more than forty years before the tract on schism

^h Confess. p. 329, note.

Schism was written, as in 1593, 1605, 1612, 1628, and many before.

So that you may see, or if you will not, your reader may, how small a matter stands for *almost a demonstration*, or, as you have softened it in your second edition, *a very strong presumption*, with you, when you please. Another, at most, would only have concluded, that Hales had not seen a copy, in which the clause about the church's authority was in the XXth article; or did not believe such article to be a true one. But it might, notwithstanding, be held for authentick by the generality; and to say, that probably the clause was not in any of the printed books then in use (in 1636) is the wildest extravagance of scepticism. For it is well known that an edition with that clause was printed by the King's printer but eight years before; besides several other editions quite up to 1579. In all likelihood, Laud might confront Hales with an authentick book: but Hales did not know beforehand that he could. You think it incredible, that Hales should write so boldly to Laud, if there was an article against him; but it was almost as bold if there was none; and he knew Laud better than you: he had no doubt of his bearing with the frankness of an honest sensible man, and the event justified him. Indeed Hales was by nature bold and free, and, as quick wits often are, apt to be much too hasty and peremptory in his assertions. He owned, that he had spoken too generally, when he said, that church-authority was none. He still spake too generally, as a little reflection would have shewn him, when he said, that none but papists allowed it any in decision of church-questions. For he must have soon recollected, that this was very contrary to the notions of the Dutch divines at Dort,

Dort, and of protestant divines in general. And we know not to what further limitations, perhaps very sufficient ones, he might be reduced in his private conference with the archbishop: a conference, which did equal honor to both. For it shewed in a very strong light the condescension, candor, and patience, of the one, notwithstanding his natural vehemence; and the good sense and courage for which you recommend the other, in yielding to conviction, notwithstanding his former positiveness. These things appear fully from Heylin's relation of it immediately from the lips of Hales, as soon as it was over; who, he saith, told him, that in their debate, which lasted several hours, he found ' the archbishop, whom he ' knew before for a nimble disputant, to be as ' well versed in books as business; that he had been ' ferretted by him from one hole to another, till ' there was none left to afford him any further ' shelter; that he was now resolved to be *orthodox*, and to declare himself a *true* son of the ' church of England, both for *doctrine* and *discipline*; that, to this end, he had obtained leave to ' call himself his grace's chaplain, that naming ' him in his publick prayers for his lord and patron, ' the greater notice might be taken of the alteration.¹ Hales was made Laud's chaplain in 1638, and canon of Windsor in 1639, at which time he must have subscribed the articles, and, in all likelihood, a copy which had the clause; for I presume none else had been printed, or perhaps used, for eleven years before. And now, sir, permit me, in my turn, to recommend the memorable Mr. Hales's *good sense* and *courage* to your imitation.

In

¹ Life of Abp. Laud, p. 340;

In your first edition, you immediately draw a conclusion, from Hales's denial of church-authority, in these words; *It is not unlikely that Laud, upon this occasion, might resolve to stop that gap for the future, and take care that the subsequent editions should be MORE CORRECTLY printed.** You certainly do not mean to commend Laud for this correction, but leave the reader to chuse which opinion he pleases: either that of Burton in 1637, that the clause was an original forgery of Laud's, or that he foisted into the article anew, an old forgery. From the first charge, you could yourself have vindicated the archbishop, had you been so inclined, from Anthony Collins, who, in the introduction to his Essay on the XXXIX articles so often referred to by you, says, that 'it was manifestly a FALSE charge on Laud himself; for the clause, though forged, was not newly forged but of ancient date.' But indeed, though Collins calls him a forger, as reviving an old forgery, this clause was not one; for Wolf's Latin edition hath the clause, which certainly was an *authentick* copy. [For, 1. It was printed in 1563; before which year the convocation that passed the articles did not rise. 2. It is the oldest copy of the printed articles, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, that I, or any body else, know of. 3. It came out by the Queen's printer, and by her authority, *Regiâ auctoritate in lucem editi*, as it is set forth in the title-page. 4. The ratification at the end mentions, that the Queen had diligently read over, examined, and approved, the said articles.

It would be too tedious to enter minutely into the controversy about this clause. The vindication of it may be safely rested on Bennet's Essay on the XXXIX articles, notwithstanding Collins's

Historical

* Confess. first edit. p. 295, note.

¹ Introd. p. 30.

Historical and critical Essay in answer to it; who objects, I. 'That the clause is wanting in King Edward's articles, which were the articles laid before the convocation of 1562, for the groundwork of the intended articles of the church.' True; but there were many alterations, subtractions, and insertions, made in that convocation, of which this *might* be one. — II. 'That the MS. articles subscribed by that convocation, now preserved in Bennet-college library, had not the clause.' — Admitted; but, 1. That MS. is not the *authentick* copy of the articles, having neither parliamentary, nor royal, ratification. 2. It was not an engrossed act of convocation, but a rough draught upon paper. 3. It doth not agree with the publick register of the articles preserved in the registry of the see of Canterbury, in which the clause was read; as appears by many attested examinations, before it was burnt by the fire of London. 4. It certainly is not the autograph from which Wolf printed his edition, as the errors of his autograph, which he has marked in the margin, are not mentioned by the collators of the Bennet MS. to be in *that*; and a remarkable one, which certainly is in the Bennet MS. is not mentioned, in the margin of Wolf's edition, to have been in the autograph from which he printed. — Collins objects, III. 'The MS. articles, subscribed by the bishops in convocation in 1571, had not the clause.' — Neither was it in the subscribed MS. of 1562, yet was evidently in the original Latin copy, authenticated by the Queen's approbation. There were many alterations made, as corrections of literal mistakes, nay additions and omissions, at least one of each kind without changing the doctrine: thus the XXIXth was

* *Introduct.* p. 32.

was left out in Wolf's Latin and both the old English editions before 1571, although it had been subscribed in the MS. of 1562; so that the subscribed MS. was no more the autograph from which the English articles were printed, than it was that from which the Latin one was. It was also not in Edward's articles; but there is added a clause, at the end of the XXVIIth article, which virtually implies all that is said in the XXIXth. So again, the first clause in the XXth was neither in Edward the sixth's book, nor in the MS. subscribed in 1562; yet it was inserted in Wolf's authentick Latin copy, without altering the doctrine of the article. Indeed the very framing of the XXXIX articles implies the church to have this power: and denying the church a power to ordain any thing that is *contrary* to God's word written, or to expound one place of scripture as that it be *repugnant* to another, implies that it has a power to ordain or expound *agreeably* to scripture; and therefore the words being really of no great importance, and the former part of them at least being in effect expressed in another article, the wonder is not near so great, as at first sight it may appear, that scarce any notice was taken by any party, for a long time, of their being put in, or left out, in the several editions of the articles. — Small matters were but little minded by most persons in those days. And Mr. Collins admits; 'The managers in the affairs of articles, and other convocational acts, seem not to have been bound by the strict words before them, in copying or printing them, but took the liberty of varying and changing some words, and striking out sentences on occasion, though before agreed on

“ on in convocation.” So that a subscribed MS. is not proof against a subsequent authoritative act. The MS of 1562 is not evidence sufficient to set aside the record of the convocation house, and Wolf’s authentick copy which agreed with it : and in 1571, we have subscription against subscription ; if the bishops subscribed a MS which wanted the clause in the XXth, and inserted the whole XXIXth article ; the lower house subscribed a copy which had the clause, and wanted the XXIXth article ; for it subscribed a copy of Wolf’s edition, now in the Bodleian library, with the roll of names added to it. So utterly void of truth is the suspicion of Laud’s contriving or abetting a forgery, by causing this clause to be printed in 1636.

It is true the above passage, quoted from your note at p. 295 of your first edition, you have omitted in your second edition, p. 330 : but no desire to do justice to Laud appears by this omission ; for what Heylin calls his *constraining the printers to reprint that part of the book according to the genuine and ancient copies*, you say, *is called by Collins a FORGERY* : to which you assent, by throwing in the weight of your authority : *and surely not without reason, if, before that CONSTRAINT, there were NO Latin copies which had the clause.* But there were many ; of which five remain to this day : one in St. John’s college library in Cambridge, another in that of Bennet college in the same university,^p two in the Bodleian library in Oxford, and one in my possession. Whether Heylin’s friend could find one in the bookseller’s shops in Oxford at that time, is not material : supposing he could not, this is no proof that there

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^a Essay, p. 65.

^c Confess. p. 331, note.

^p Vindication of the Ch. of Engl. p. 152.

never was any, contrary to fact at this day demonstrable. Nay the English copy which was produced, was proof that Laud did not forge it three years after; and was certainly a better proof of the articles of the church of England, than the Latin book produced by the professor Priedeaux, which was the *Consensus confessionum* published at Geneva. And although the MSS. and prints varied from one another; and of the latter, both in Latin and English, some read and some did not read this clause, there appears not, that I recollect, to have been any contention, or offence taken, with respect to either reading, till this year 1633. This is made an argument by Hamilton, in his *Some necessity of Reformation*, p. 14. to exculpate the puritans, who had been charged with purposely omitting this clause in the English editions of 1563: 'Is it a thing likely, that so soon after the convocation, puritans durst or would do such a thing, and pass so quietly away with it, and without noise made by the bishops?' The like argument will hold as strongly to prove that the bishops were not suspected of inserting it without authority. For, as the *Vindicator* argues,^a if the question had been then moved, would Cartwright have said nothing upon it? The *vindicator* likewise mentions a book, said to be written about the year 1583, entitled, *Certain reasons against subscription to the book of articles*, in which the author objects to the 6th, 7th, 16th, 21st, 33d, 35th, and 36th, articles, yet says nothing against the 20th: nor were any exceptions made against it in the conference at Hampton-Court. Which, I think, proves, as before observed, that neither side yet thought the difference of the copies, in this instance, of any

^a *Vindicat.* p. 158.

any importance. Indeed in 1633 the professor, who could produce no Latin authority *against* the clause but the Geneva book, (Day's edition being as hard to come at, as Wolf's by Heylin) resolved to be furnished with one, by setting the Oxford press at work, to publish a Latin edition without the clause; which Laud forbade, and ordered that leaf, which contained the XXth article, should be cancelled, and a new one, with the clause, inserted in the place of it. A copy of which, with the *corrected* leaf, I have seen; as you have a copy of it in which the leaf was not cancelled. The English copies with the clause had been frequently printed before this time; and, I believe, never were any printed without it after the year 1579. Nor was it material whether it was added or omitted; the part that is in *all* copies implies what is added in others. You indeed say, no; and propose the terms of the Latin article to our consideration. *Ecclesie non licet quicquam instituire quod verbo Dei adversetur, neque unum scriptura locum sic exponere potest, ut alteri contradicat.* By the church, you admit the clergy, or church representative, as you call it, to be meant; not the aggregate of head and members together, or church diffusive. Now, you say, *wherever there is a non licet, there is a law implied, and likewise a judge of transgressions against the law: Who then is the judge of these institutions, with respect to their agreement with the word of God? not the church representative, for there is no . . . exclusive power given her of interpreting the scripture, the consequence is, that the power of judgement devolves upon the church diffusive, the cœtus fidelium, as it is called in the foregoing article.* The law is the word of God: the judge of our interpretation of

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† Confess. p. 333, note.

it is neither the *representative* or *diffusive* church, but the lawgiver himself, our only judge, Christ Jesus : to whom the church *representative* must account for their discharge of their duty in diligently or negligently, truly or falsely, interpreting God's word ; and the church *diffusive*, for the rashly receiving a false interpretation or causelessly rejecting a true one. And whether this interpretation be given collectively by a synod, or singly by individual pastors, they equally claim and exercise the authority of interpreting the word of God. The first is the safest : but neither have authority to force assent : every one must judge for himself as far as he is able ; but must answer to God for the use of the reason, opportunities, and ministeries, given or appointed for him, when the law hath been sufficiently promulgated and explained. Your friend Collins therefore objects impertinently and unfairly, that, in the *Reformatio legum*, in which book is a system of *doctrine* as well as of *discipline*, ' all ' the present words of the XXth article appear, ' except the clause of the church's power.' I say, this is *impertinently* objected, if the divines, concerned in drawing up this system of *doctrine and discipline* in 1552, or the puritan faction in the parliament of 1571, who moved for confirming it, thought the church really had this power, though in the place referred to, p. 3. (it should be p. 5.) they do not expressly, only implicitly claim it : and it is *unfairly* objected, because, though not expressly claimed in that place, yet at p. 105. *De rebus in synodo episcopali tractandis*, cap. 22. we have the following words, *Si qua corruptio veræ doctrine obrepserit, coarguatur. In scripturis quæ cum animarum offensione perperam exponuntur,*
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juxta fidei orthodoxæ convenientiam explicentur. Et quæ fortassis non intellecta conscientias perturbant, fideliter excutiantur et declarentur. What they gave to an episcopal synod they certainly meant not to deny to a provincial or national one. And the church representative in convocation exercised this power in framing their articles of religion, even without the clause; and the parliament assented to it in giving their sanction to them.

After this cruel treatment of Archbishop Laud you return to the plea of *impracticability*, and apply it as a scourge to the *modern* governours of the church. But here I must beg you to observe and keep in mind, what the real plea of the sincere and genuine clergy of the church of England is. They say, that the alterations which you and your friends would make in respect of our articles, liturgy, &c. are most of them for the worse: and that such of them as may be for the better, are neither necessary nor of very great moment; and are in the present state of the nation, to all appearance, impracticable, or likely at least to produce more harm than good. Either you must disprove this, or you prove nothing. You say, that, while the clergy complain of the people, *others see that the infection of the times hath laid hold even on these venerable personages, and produced appearances of secularity which disparage their sacred characters.** So far as this is true, I am heartily sorry for it. But they, of whom it is true, cannot have due weight to assist you in reforming any thing. And if the fault be general, as you seem to think it, your first step should have been, not writing against confessions, but reforming the clergy. One would imagine, indeed, by your intimation, p. 362. that *there is no*

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separating

* Confess. p. 335, 336.

separating functions from abuses, your scheme to be the abolition of the clergy, and the finding out other functions, which would equally answer the end of an effectual reformation. By what authority you would do this you have not signified. And I hope we are not so bad as to require the utmost extremities. This at least I know, that when one of our Saviour's apostles had denied him, and all forsaken him, he did not revoke his appointment of them, but with proper exhortations renewed their commission. Surely then the most blameless of his followers ought to observe the rule, *If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.* And remember, sir, there are temptations to faults still worse than secularity. Very blameable degrees of that sin may, in times and countries of licentious indulgence, creep in upon well-meaning persons: and the sight of it must grieve every truly pious mind. But if there be any one, who, instead of being concerned at the failings of his fellow-ministers, and the hurt done to religion by them, takes pleasure to publish them, to aggravate them, to enlarge upon them with expressions of scorn, contempt, and malevolence, how sincere soever his zeal may be, hath along with it, whether he perceives it or not, an evil spirit the most directly opposite to the genuine temper of Christianity that possibly can be. Admonish us therefore, sir, and we will join with you in the good work. But form yourself first to a disposition of good-will towards us, and perhaps we shall appear in a better light to you. United friendly endeavours to amend ourselves and each other may do much, though many imperfections must still be suffered. But I acknowledge myself
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one of those weak short-sighted brethren, who cannot comprehend, how either abolishing the function of Christian teachers can contribute to the planting and bringing forth of more evangelical fruit, or how taking pains to make them thought worse than they are, can be the means of making them more useful in a nation already so full of prejudices against them.

You tax these teachers, particularly the eminent prelate who died in 1761, with persuading his brethren to conform to the world, rather than to attempt reforming it; because, he says, 'in all proposals and schemes to be reduced to practice, we must suppose the world to be *what it is*, not *what it ought to be*.' Which you think inconsistent with other of his doctrines, *unless conforming to what the world is, and conforming to the sovereignty of Christ in his own kingdom, are precisely one and the same thing.* Now, the bishop in these words recited, hath certainly not directed us *to conform to the world*: but that, if we would attempt a practicable reformation, we must suppose the world to be *WHAT IT IS*, NOT *WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE*. And surely this is right: for, if we suppose the world to be *WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE*, what occasion is there for attempting to reform it? Suppose it to be as *IT IS*, and we see reason sufficient to attempt it by such means as are in our power. But till God and the state shall give us more, we must not expect miracles, or snatch the sword from the hand of the magistrate. You tell us indeed that the Calvinists, at Dort, whose discipline you recommend, held *that the civil magistrate, who did not enforce the church's decisions, ceased to be a child of God, and might be deposed from his office, and that many of the English puritans, perhaps the greater part of*

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them

*them in secret, entertained the same notions.** We have before seen, that 'they required kings and 'queens to subject themselves to the church, 'and submit their sceptres, and throw down 'their crowns before the church, and lick the 'dust of its feet.' Nay, they actually did make both the king and chief pastor lay down their heads at their feet; which *spirited* enterprize you are not ashamed to applaud. Such reformation we will never attempt, for it is beyond our commission: but the conscientious discharge of our functions, for this purpose, I hope we shall persevere in, how apparently fruitless soever our former trials may have been. For, though *the light of our testimony may appear to be wholly extinguished, and the seed we sow totally buried and corrupted, yet the one may blaze out, and the other spring up and flourish, in its due season, how, and where, and when, we are unable to foresee, or even to conceive.*^z This, I trust, may be, at least, as well-grounded a hope to us, as it is to you; and not be discouraged by your ill usage and unjust reproaches, which even so great a favorite as Bp. Hoadley cannot escape.

You tell us, that they, *who desire to put a negative upon a review of our ecclesiastical system, will own that the body of the people sit in darkness: which, you say, implies, that, were they more enlightened, they would have no inconsiderable objections to the forms, in which they now acquiesce.*^a And we indeed own, as every body must, that the body of our people and of all people are ignorant; and we heartily wish they could and would have more knowledge: but this by no means im-

plies,

* Confess. p. 264, 265.

y See before p. 59.

z Confess. p. 375.

a Confess. p. 338.

plies, that, if they had, they would have considerable objections against the forms in which they now acquiesce. Many of them, we are persuaded, would acquiesce in forms against which they now object; and many would acquiesce in them more entirely and firmly than they do at present.

You represent your adversaries as admitting, that the light which their people who sit in darkness will not bear, is *that of the gospel as preached by Christ and his apostles*: and you think it not a little strange, that it should be unseasonable and intolerable after the gospel hath been taught near 1800 years.^b But pray, sir, of what adversaries are you speaking? It is very true that many have the light, because their deeds are evil; and hate the ministers of the gospel, because it is the light and the truth. And many always have done so. But who ever pleaded this as a reason why any part of the gospel, as preached by Christ and his apostles, should be concealed or should not be diligently inculcated? No true and consistent member of the church of England, I am sure. You fight therefore with shadows, or however not with us, in combating such arguments. Prove that any of your changes are required by the gospel; and we are ready to adopt them immediately. But we expect proof, not assertion only. And in matters which the gospel hath left indifferent, circumstances of times and prejudices of persons may well be regarded; and long usage even respected.

Our Saviour, you say, *paid little respect to the established church, but openly opposed their forms of worship and points of doctrine.*^c True, their hurtful ones: but he recommended the observance of other

^b Ibid.

^c Confess. p. 339.

other traditions, Matth. xxiii. 1, &c. Besides, he intended to destroy their church. As you intend to destroy ours, no wonder if you act as you understand him to have done. Only I hope you do not claim quite so much authority.

To prevent the clergy from justifying themselves in a prudent accommodation to the times, from the example of St. Paul, who became *all things to all men, that he might save some*,^a you inform us, that *some of his accommodations turned out very unhappily; and that you have sometimes thought, that there are some, no very obscure marks, discernible, in his epistle to the Galatians, that he thought he had formerly gone too far in those compliances.* There is indeed some obscurity in the text of this epistle on this very point: and the sense is rendered more doubtful by the diversity of readings; but the marks of the apostle's thinking that he had formerly complied too far, are so obscure as not to be at all discernible. The ancient Latin copies make him a complier in the very instance of Titus; whom, being a Gentile, he did not constrain to be circumcised, till he came to Jerusalem; but there, by reason of some false brethren who watched to take an advantage, he yielded a temporary compliance, lest diversity of opinion should extinguish the gospel light. Primasius, a commentator of the sixth century, at the words, *Quibus neque ad horam cessimus*, says, *Latinus habet, Quibus ad horam cessimus*. According to which reading he did yield, even in the instance of Titus. But his prudent accommodation of himself to the times and seasons is as evident in this very case, supposing, as I believe it is, that the Greek reading is the true one: namely, that he did not yield to those factious Jews, *no, not for*

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^a 1 Cor. ix. 22.

^e Confess. p. 343.

an hour, or in the least. For he would not preach his peculiar doctrines publicly, only conferred privately with Peter, James, and John; upon the subject, who approved his opinion, but perhaps would not countenance his opposition to the Jews till that opinion was confirmed synodically; and then, backed by such an authority, St. Paul would not allow one who was altogether a Gentile to submit to circumcision. The former compliances, in which he thought he had gone too far, I read nothing of: but that he made many prudential compliances and accommodations afterwards I do read, and so do you; for he thought it necessary to circumcise Timothy, because of the Jews which were in those parts. But this it seems, in your opinion, was a fault in this great apostle, who must come to school to learn Christianity from the author of the Confessional. At least, to deter the clergy from prudence, you represent St. Paul as having too much of it: or perhaps you really think him inexcusable for not being as vehement as yourself.

You say the world is not mended, since Bp. Hoadly *advanced the maxim of considering it as it is, rather than as it ought to be.* A maxim, which, in your sense of it, I hope never was his; and, in the right sense, hath always been every man's of common understanding, on all occasions. I wish the world were mended. But if we are to exchange continually what doth not appear to have done much good, for its contrary, whatever harm it may do, I shall think it farther off from amendment than ever.

To an author, who alledges, that *speculative truths* ought not to be received at the expence of the peace and quiet of the world,^a you answer, and for ought

^f Ibid.

^g Confess. p. 344.

^h P. 349.

ought I know very justly, that *no religious truth or error is merely speculative.*¹ But the practical influence of some is much less than of others. And accordingly, there are cases in which teachers may and ought to leave their hearers for the present in ignorance or even mistake. Our Saviour *had many things to say to his disciples: but they could not bear them then.*² St. Paul *fed the Corinthians with milk, and not meat, because hitherto they were not able to bear it.*³ And though, ever since the complete publication of the Christian covenant, every article of it is necessary to be taught, and no falshood ought at any time to be taught, yet there may be persons, congregations, countries, ages, to which the declaration of whatever any one knows or thinks to be true, in relation to religious matters, may do unspeakably more harm, than the improvement of their understandings by it will do them good. Whoever conceals useful things for his own private benefit is a selfish secular man: but he who proclaims dangerous ones, if to raise his own character, is a vain one; if to depress others, a malicious one; if without attention to consequences, an indiscrete one: whereas fear of introducing disorder and confusion, even where it is excessive, nay groundless, implies a benevolent humility. *Knowledge puffeth up; but charity edifieth.*⁴ May you not do well, sir, to judge yourself by these considerations, before you go on to judge others with severity?

You applaud Dr. Middleton's system of the miraculous powers, &c. as beneficial to religion and society: and on that foundation raise a question, which you think will distress us. Before I proceed

¹ P. 351.

² 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

³ John xvi. 12.

⁴ 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

proceed to that, permit me to observe, that the common system had been very well defended against popish conclusions from it long before Dr. Middleton was born: that I never heard of one man who became a protestant, or was kept from becoming a papist, by reading what he had wrote on the subject; but I have heard of more than one, whom it perverted to infidelity, or confirmed in it: and that the world, I believe, is pretty well agreed, which effect he designed it should have. Permit me also to digress so far as to add, that the *almost demonstrated* doctrine, as you think it, of the soul's annihilation at death, is no way necessary to guard against Romish superstitions, hath never, I conceive, made one deist a Christian, but hath a strong tendency to make every deist a wicked man: though, I am verily persuaded, from the author's general character, that his intention is good. And therefore I wish that nothing in favour of either of these tenets had ever seen the light.

And now to your question: *If a person should think that some system, under the protection of an establishment, was just as pernicious to the cause of true religion, and just as void of truth and reason, as the system of miraculous powers in the post-apostolick church, what is to be done? is this man to sit down to acquiesce with the herd, under the apprehension of causing a faction, and unsettling, in some degree, the peace and quiet of the world?* Now give me leave to ask you a question in return, and perhaps your answer may help me to one. The anabaptists and papists, at the time of the reformation, thought the English ecclesiastical system, under the protection of an establishment, was pernicious to the cause of true religion, &c. What was

^a Confess. p. 355.

was to be done? Were they to sit down and acquiesce, &c? I am certain you will think that they ought to have considered their differences from the establishment very carefully, and consulted the reformers and their books very candidly, and such of them as were convinced have yielded to conviction; that the rest should not have reviled or calumniated the publick doctrine, or endeavoured to raise an odium against their superiors in church or state; or have continued in stations, which obliged them to teach what they did not believe; that they should not have taught, even in more private assemblies, what the government forbid, and themselves thought unnecessary: and that if they did think it necessary to teach what authority had forbidden, they should do it with such modesty and peaceable acquiescence in the provisions made against it, as might justly induce the legislature to be as mild in those provisions as possible. Now these things, sir, we think others ought to do likewise. And if subjects would have done them honestly, and prelates and magistrates have been influenced by such behaviour as they were in duty bound, *the creed, and the whole state of the protestant world, at this instant,* we apprehend would have been a very good one.

But who, after all, are these persons, supposed by you to think *some other system, under the protection of our establishment, pernicious to religion, &c.* And what is that system? no other, it seems, than that of *the great Albanasius*,^{*} in other words, the doctrine of the trinity as taught in our church. The opposers of that, then, reckoned amongst the anabaptists by our reformers, are the persons, concerning whom we have answered,

^{*} Ibid

^{*} Confess. p. 356.

answered, what they are to do. But let us at the same time consider, what we are to do. Not, surely, to admit, on your insinuations and assertions, or those of your party, that this doctrine is false, and that Arianism would be a reformation. By what right do you expect it of us? we have proved, and we are ready to prove the contrary. And therefore if you cannot acquiesce in the established belief, much less can we in your attack upon it.

That, indeed, you tell us, was quite peaceable: and we, the defendants, were alone to blame. For when some of these anabaptistical errors (as K. Edward's articles called them) were revived by Mr. Whiston, Dr. Clarke, the bishop of Clogher, and others, you admit that *factions ensued*; but you ask, *whence did they arise? we must look for them among the clergy.*^a That is, they were very inoffensive, in contradicting the doctrines of the church, which were established for avoiding those errors; and the faction was in those unreasonable governours of the church, who would needs support the old doctrines, taught here ever since we separated from Rome, for 200 years; and generally assented to throughout the Christian world for 1400. These harmless souls desire no disturbance: they only wished to be indulged in the peaceable liberty of giving the lye to the church, and of sharing in her preferments for so doing. So gentle-spirited are they still, that, in return for restoring these *sensible and conscientious brethren to the Christian liberty* of publicly teaching what the church judges to be heresy, and of enjoying her emoluments, they think there is no need, FOR THE PRESENT at least, to preclude others from expressing their belief of,

^a Confess. p. 356, 357.

of, and their veneration for, every thing established in the church of England, in as high terms as they can invent.* And are not these very model men?

But I perceive, say you, a *fly orthodox brother* *Soft and fair!*—as you presently subjoin, Why is an orthodox brother to be treated by you with less civility than a heterodox brother? But what of this *fly orthodox brother*? why, he asks, if the present attempt to reform, according to the detestable systems of Arius and Socinus . . . does not confirm the suspicions of those who imputed these views to the free and candid disquisitors? To which you reply, *Soft and fair!* Let the disquisitors answer for themselves. Had you shewn a disposition to reform those necessary matters which they laid before you, time and credit would have been given you for the rest. This I presume to say on the part of the disquisitors. It is therefore you yourself, not the *fly orthodox brother*, that will not let the disquisitors answer for themselves. And doubtless they, or such as thus answer for them, think themselves very gracious in giving us time and credit for banishing the doctrine of the Trinity. But perhaps this temporizing would be doing what you have, for so many pages, just been condemning. They do not indeed say, how much time and credit they would give us. I believe very little, after they had power in their hands. At least you shew very little of such a spirit of toleration. But would they or you be ever so forbearing, we cannot take time and credit: for that implies, that, sooner or later, payment must be made. Now the doctrine of the trinity is what we cannot ever give up.

Many

* Confess. p. 378, 379.

* Confess. p. 358.

Many of the wiser and more thinking part of the clergy, as you inform us, have been long sick of the Athanasian creed, and have, by degrees, disused it in their churches; and many of the congregations, where it has been so disused, if by accident an officiating stranger should read it to them in its course, have been known to signify their surprise and dislike by very manifest tokens. Either the disquisitors were none of these wise and thinking part of the clergy, or they were insincere in their professions, for they say, 'We unfeignedly assent to that creed, on the whole.'^a But what do you mean by many of the congregations expressing their dislike of it? If you mean many IN the congregation, you may say true; and so you may have formerly seen many sit down when the king was prayed for. If you mean many whole congregations, I doubt the truth of your assertion: and, if true, it will only prove that many of your wise and thinking clergy, have habitually broken their solemn promise, that they would conform to the English liturgy as by law established; and then some in their congregation, having been misled by them, may have expressed their surprise at what they had not been used to; and some their dislike at the minister's reading what they did not know he was to read; and some perhaps at the damnatory clauses. But all this doth not prove their dislike of the doctrine: but they may have joined in other forms that expressed it, the very same day.

But the bishop of Clogher, than whom no man knew the world better, was persuaded, that if my Lords the bishops would but shew themselves inclined to amend, what they cannot but acknowledge to be amiss, they will find the laity ready to assist and support them rather than otherwise.^w Now the

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bishop

^a Confess. p. 360.^w Ch. vi.^v Confess. p. 362.

bishop of Clogher meant by amendment, introducing his Arian system; and he did not find the laity ready to assist him in that. You mean by amendments, besides that and several other things, depriving the clergy of their honors, and part at least of their profits. Probably a great part of the laity would come into that; but most probably the crown would not: and certainly the bishop of Clogher would have opposed it as much as any man, instead of taking that way to attain *esteem and affection*, however self-denying you are pleased to make him, without proof. And I believe the warmest of your few admirers amongst the clerical order will be full as far from agreeing with you cordially on this point, as the most strenuous of your opposers.

However, to shew your candor, *you are willing that our spiritual fathers, among whom are some persons of distinguished merit, should have the benefit of every plea that can possibly be offered for their inactivity and acquiescence in our present inconvenient and unedifying system:*^x And therefore of this, if any of them can make it; that though they have concurred in the support of what is contrary to pure religion, *that they have done it innocently with respect to themselves, being led thereto by INVINCIBLE PREJUDICES.*^y But till you have proved our present system *inconvenient and unedifying*, our spiritual fathers attachment to it may be, what some of them have nobly proved it to have been, an unshaken constancy and perseverance in *earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*;^z not only with the hazard, but the loss, of all the good things of this life, and even of that life itself. And your reproaching that faith as an *incon-*
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^x Confess. p. 363.

^y P. 364.

^z Jude, *†*. 3.

venient and unedifying system, and its professors, some of whom bore so glorious testimony in its defence as weak mistaken men, proclaims aloud the PREJUDICE you labor under, which perhaps a long indulgence of your rancor may by this time have stiffened into an INVINCIBLE one.

But had it been a sufficient plea, you will not with all your candor, allow our spiritual fathers the benefit of invincible prejudice, for acquiescing in *our present inconvenient and unedifying system* : and that in part because — Jerome and Erasmus had *prejudices* which were not *invincible*. And were Jerome and Erasmus *our* spiritual fathers who acquiesced in *our* system ? These therefore I pass over as nothing to your argument, however you may think it to your purpose to keep your virulent pen in exercise.

But yet, *our* spiritual fathers must not think to escape, you therefore add, *Come we now to some doctors of our own reformed church.** And you have picked out *two*, the first is Archbishop Whitgift, of whom you relate the following fact : In the year 1572, a pamphlet was published in defence of the *famous* Admonition to parliament, intituled, An exhortation to the bishops, wherein their Lordships were reminded, 'how hard it was to punish the favorers and abettors of the Admonition, because they did but disclose the disorders of the church of England, and only required a reformation of the same, according to the rule of God's word; whereas many lewd and light books and ballads flew abroad, printed not only without reprobation but cum privilegio. Archbishop Whitgift condescended to answer this pamphlet."

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Now,

* Confess. p. 369.

^b Confess. p. 366, 370, from Strype's Life of Whitgift, p. 40.

Now, should the reader, who cannot be supposed to know or carry the dates of every occurrence in his head, imagine, from the mode of dressing up this paragraph, that Whitgift was *then* archbishop; that the exhortation to the bishops was to *him* among the rest; that *he* was reminded of suffering lewd and light books and ballads to fly abroad *cum privilegio*, whereas it was the archbishop's duty to see to the licencing of the press; and that *he, when archbishop*, condescended to answer this pamphlet: I presume, sir, he would only fall into the snare which you have purposely laid for him. Whitgift, at that time, 1572, was only a doctor in divinity and master of Trinity College in Cambridge. So that all the insinuations in the paragraph, and the bold assertion that follows it, are false; *archbishop* Whitgift did not condescend to answer that pamphlet.

I thought it proper to observe this, that the reader may be the more upon his guard, after your *unfairness* hath been so often detected. Let us next examine the fact itself. This is not represented according to the authority you quote to justify your account of it. Strype, in the place referred to, says nothing of the bishops being reminded how hard it was to punish the favorers of the Admonition; which yet you distinguish, as if they were the words taken from his Life of Whitgift, p. 40. where he is recapitulating the contents of the second pamphlet, viz. *The exhortation to the bishops*. Something like it was said before, in his account of another pamphlet, called the *Preface*, and you joined them together to form this contrast: the favorers of the *Admonition* are punished for disclosing the disorders of the church, while lewd and light books and ballads are printed *cum privilegio*.

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The reasons, mentioned in *the exhortation to the bishops to deal brotherly with the authors of the Admonition*, were five : 1. *Because they were their brethren.* To which Dr. Whitgift replied,

‘ That notwithstanding they were brethren, they were not therefore to escape punishment for their offences : and that some of them, in open speech, and manifest signs, accounted not the ministers of the church *their* brethren ; nor acknowledged them as such.’ — 2. *Because they*

ought first to have discovered unto the world by the word of God, how true or false they have written.

3. *Because they did but disclose the disorders of our church of England ; and therefore only desired a reformation of the same, according to the rule of God’s word.* To these two he answered together ;

‘ That these men had been talked with, and heard what they they had to say for themselves ; but their haughty minds and good opinion conceived of themselves would not suffer them to

‘ see their errors.’ — 4. *That the papists lay abroad in their dioceses untouched.* The doctor replied,

‘ That if this was true, it was a great fault, and could not be excused ; and he prayed God it might be better looked to : but this was no good and sufficient reason for the impunity of others.’ — Lastly, it was objected, *that*

many lewd, light books and ballads flew abroad, printed, not only without reprehension, but cum privilegio. His answer you have fairly given us,

‘ It was a fault to suffer lewd ballads and books touching *manners* ; but it was a greater fault to suffer books and libels, disturbing the peace of the church, and defacing true religion.’ But

when you collect his meaning from those words, you dilate it into three points, no one of which was asserted or intended by him. And I leave it

to the reader's judgement whether you must not, in every one, have accused him contrary to the conviction of your own conscience, unless you have taught it by long perversion to say what you please. Thus you draw them forth :

Which was to say, 1. That lewd books and ballads, printed with privilege, neither disturb'd the peace of the church, nor defaced true religion.^c Now it was impossible he should mean, that they absolutely did neither : no Christian of common understanding could mean it : but that such things, being relished by few besides the grossly vicious and inconsiderate, and usually also self-condemned, were not to be compared for mischief with attempts to stir up the serious people of a whole nation to *strife and confusion, and every evil work.* 2. *That provided the church might quietly enjoy and practise her forms, rites, and ceremonies, titles, and emoluments, it was the less material what were the MANNERS of her people.* Now, he mentions not a syllable of forms, rites, ceremonies, titles, and emoluments, much less of their preference to *good manners.* And he could not, and his writings prove beyond contradiction that he did not, think the manners of the people less material than these things. But he might well think, that when a publick establishment was formed for teaching the people both good manners and piety, publishing wild invectives against it, with a view or a chance of setting up, if any thing, somewhat much worse in its stead, was more pernicious in its effects, though not more criminal in the intention, than dispersing some immoral pamphlets and songs ; the evil of which, though a necessary object of animadversion, would be less extensive and more easily restrained.

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^c Confess. p. 370.

In short, that though it were an injury to steal the fruit of the tree in an instance or two; yet it was a greater, to destroy the tree, *root and branch*.

3. *That true religion consisted in those forms, rites, ceremonies, titles, and powers, which the puritans were for defacing.* But why so? St. Paul taught that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, consists not in ceremonials and externals: yet he taught, that by the wrong use of these things *we may destroy him for whom Christ died.*^a And so might the archbishop judge, that true religion by no means consisted in those forms, which the puritans were for defacing; but that still, in their unjust prejudices against those forms, and their factious endeavours to overturn them, *they walked not charitably, followed not the things which made for peace, and by which one may edify another.** And therefore were highly blameable. Indeed, that this was in fact his manner of thinking appears from the dedication of his answer to Cartwright's Reply: In which 'he dared boldly to affirm, ' that all points of religion necessary to salvation, ' and touching either the mystery of our redemption in Christ, or the right use of the sacraments, ' or the true manner of worshipping God; were ' as purely and perfectly taught, and by publick ' authority established in this church of England ' at that day, as ever they were in any church, ' since the apostles time, or then were in any ' reformed church in the world. The which to ' be true, those that were learned (even among ' the mislikers of this present state) could not, nor ' would deny.'—' What shall we then think, says ' he, of those men that are so far from acknowledging this singular and unspeakable benefit, proceeding from the mere mercy of God; that are

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^a Rom. xiv. 15, 17.^{*} Rom. xiv. 15, 19.

' so far from being thankful for the same, and
 ' from desiring the continuance of it with hearty
 ' prayers; that by all means possible they seek
 ' rather to obscure it and deface it; because in
 ' certain accidental points they have not their
 ' fancies and proper devices. . . . How much
 ' better had it been for them to have proceeded in
 ' teaching necessary points of doctrine, and ex-
 ' horted to obedience, to concord, to godly life
 ' and conversation.' So that whilst the puritans
 made *true religion* to consist in *their fancies and de-*
vices, which were only a changing of *forms,*
rites, ceremonies, titles, and powers; Dr. Whit-
 gift made it to consist in truth of *doctrine, obe-*
dience, concord, and godly life.

You are as unfortunate in your next instance,
 though you confess you take *a pretty long step* to
 come at him, skipping from 1572 to 1718, to
 chalfise Abp. Wake for his prejudices. But by
 your own acknowledgement his first prejudices, if
 he had any, were in favor of the dissenters: and he
 by no means so inactively acquiesced in our pre-
 sent system as to oppose all attempts to improve
 it. What then was his fault? why, soon after,
 when he came to be archbishop, *he opposed the re-*
peal of the schism bill,^{*} though he had protested
 against it when it passed into an act: which you
 impute to his having been promoted to the see of
 Canterbury in the interval. But might not the
 dissenters also, as well as he, have experienced a
 change in their circumstances in the same interval?
 and, from finding their influence greater, be aim-
 ing at further indulgences, than they had hither-
 to contentedly enjoyed, or than could be safely
 granted them? For dissenters, as well as bishops,
 are

^{*} Life of Whitgift, p. 33, 45.

^{*} Confess. p. 371.

are capable of being *intoxicated with power*. Besides, his point was to oppose the repeal of the bill against occasional conformity, which was joined with that of the schism-bill. He spoke of the latter only as needless to be repealed, because it had never been executed; though you, by mistake, represent him as alledging that it was *one of the main bulwarks and supporters of the established church*. These words were indeed spoken in the debate, but not by the archbishop, according to Tindal. But this point hath been already considered, and his Grace's conduct vindicated, in the answer to your Preface, p. 86, 87.

If this is the worst your diligent malice can find to object to our spiritual fathers of our reformed church in 200 years administration, your intended invective becomes a panegyrick; or if you selected a few only out of many, in indulgence to your own ease and that of your readers, you would certainly have picked out the strongest instances to prove your point. And how foreign to your purpose do they appear?

After this, you give solemn admonitions of their danger to all in high stations, who do not endeavour to reform the corruptions and deficiencies of the church. I hope they will all consider them seriously, and be influenced by them. But you are not to judge for them, but each for himself, though doubtless with the utmost care, what things are real corruptions or deficiencies, and of what moment; what they can do towards amending them; what they may hope or what they may fear from exerting themselves in such or such a manner. Some, who attempt less than they should, may mean well though they mistake, and should not be all given up, as seized with a judicial *spirit of slumber*. Many who do little or
[nothing

nothing in the points that you have at heart, may be doing a great deal in others to better purpose. You observe how *suddenly the free and candid disquisitions sunk into oblivion*; and represent it as the effect of *art and contumely*.^a I believe less was never used, if so little, on any like occasion. Why may not the truth be, that the book was of less importance than you imagine? Still you comfort yourself, that it *may be working silently and imperceptibly to a good end*.¹ And you add, what every true Christian will be rejoiced to see fall from your pen, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*. Apply faithfully, dear sir, to yourself and your friends this excellent maxim, which seems so providentially shot into your mind. You cannot point it against us, the established clergy: *we are sleeping on and taking our rest perhaps for many years to come*.² You and your associates are certainly wakeful and active: think whether you are not over vehement. Such undoubtedly were your predecessors, the puritans, who thought 'they ought to give their lives in defence of their platform, though every hair of their heads were a life.'³ And grew at length so wrathful as to say, 'It stands us in hand now or never to prosecute it [their fanciful reformation] with all celerity, without lingering and staying so long for parliaments.' And to ask, 'What will you say, if we overthrow the bishops and all that government in one day? If it come in by that means, which will make all your hearts to ach, you must blame yourselves.'⁴ Accordingly, in 50 years after, *with spirit and vigor* they destroyed the constitution in church and state.

^a Confess. p. 375, 376.

¹ Confess. p. 376.

² See Rogers on the Articles, Preface, No. 12.

³ Life of Whitgift, p. 334.

state. Such, though confined to a lower degree, hath been the zeal of every succeeding generation of dissenters; and such the *importunity*, as you call it, of *the clamorous disquisitors*.^m Such, I fear, is now the disposition of those *active and lively spirits who are not easy under want of employment*;ⁿⁿ but laboring, that *the light of their testimony may blaze out, either in the present or future generation*:^o to what effect you have sufficiently intimated. All the former, in their day, should have considered what the last I hope will not fail to consider, as the warning comes from so unexpected a hand, that *the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*.

At length, you desire *the reader would recollect, that your subject leads you only to one particular, the case of subscription to human creeds and confessions*. And pray, sir, how came you to forget what your subject was, for so long a time? *Such of these, you say, as have not an agreement with holy writ, ought not to be retained in the church*. And so say we: but you add, *nevertheless, it may be allowed, as due to the ignorance and prejudices of well-meaning people, not to be expedient to discontinue the use of them all at once*.^p An excellent reformer! to feed the ignorance and prejudices of the people by indulging them the use of creeds which are not agreeable to scripture! on what principles can this be justified? I suppose you learned it from Turretine and your friends at Geneva, who, ‘through regard for some members of their society, allowed doctrines to be publickly taught, which it was in some measure scandalous to speak to the people about.’^p Such are

^m Ibid.ⁿⁿ Pref. to 1 Edit. p. iii.ⁿ Confess. p. 375, 376.^o Confess. p. 377.^p See Chandler's case of subscription, p. 163, 168.

are the sentiments of reformers who cannot bear subscription! You are sensible that *it may be demanded, Would you have the church to authorize and send forth ministers among the people without guarding against preaching false and erroneous doctrines?* And you think, *the answers to the 2d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th questions in our office of ordination, seem as ample security in this behalf, as any Christian church can desire, or can be authorized to demand:*¹ namely, 'declaring that he
 * is persuaded that the holy scriptures contain
 * sufficiently all doctrine necessary to eternal salvation — that out of those scriptures he will instruct the people committed to his charge —
 * [that he will be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous
 * and strange doctrines contrary to God's word]
 * — will use both publick and private
 * monitions — be diligent in reading the holy scriptures — to frame and fashion his ownself and
 * his family according to the doctrine of Christ—
 * and will maintain quietness, peace and love amongst all Christian people.'² Now by these promises, which I have already made, and you are pleased to authorize the church to continue to demand, I think myself obliged to be ready to banish and drive away the doctrines of Arius, Socinus, Anabaptists, Papists, Fatalists, and Pelagians; because, from diligent reading of the holy scriptures, I am firmly persuaded they are contrary to God's word: you, from the same promises, and the assumption of being *more sensible and conscientious*, think yourself obliged to banish and drive away the doctrines of Athanasius, as contrary to God's word: the same obligation would lie on other sects and hereticks, under your
 new

¹ Confess. p. 380, 381, 382.

² Confess. p. 383.

new establishment; for all plead the authority of scripture. Thus your church, formed upon your own sensible plan, would do, what yet you presume no church will do, contend for a right to teach *false* doctrines; for some of those doctrines being *true*, you justly infer the contrary must be false. And what a quiet and settled state must this prudent expedient introduce, to open a door to all strange and erroneous doctrines; and then oblige the maintainers of them severally to banish and drive the others away? In your second edition indeed, you have put this promise in a parenthesis, because *it may be difficult to banish and drive away the doctrine, without banishing and driving away the man who holds them*. But as far as the argumentative persecution of the pen goes, men, though they may honestly hold contrary opinions, may, and ought to endeavour to banish and drive one another away.* This puts me in mind of what I have somewhere read, a like method of treating monkeys: they invite them by several tubs of rice placed in the middle of their wood, with a sufficient quantity of ratahs or small canes laid across the tubs, which furnishes the monkeys, as they severally advance to their food, with weapons to beat one another, till they are disabled from escaping those who purposely set this trap to catch them. You will not own this consequence to be your design: but that you were not ignorant of it is evident from what you say at page 2. *The reformers were unhappy in adopting, as a self-evident maxim, that the true sense of scripture could be but ONE, and if this ONE sense was not ascertained, a very moderate share of sagacity would enable the leading reformers to foresee, that diversity of opinions concerning many points* of

* Note at page 382.

of doctrine would be unavoidable: and that, from hence, frequent occasions of offence would arise among themselves, not without some advantage to the common enemy. Your scheme therefore is fitted, whether intended or not, to give the common enemy an advantage over us.

You condescend to state an objection which may be proposed against the sufficiency of the only declaration which you would have clergymen make: that it is *general and indeterminate*, and gives us *no evidence of the man's opinions*. And you condescend to answer, that we say *the articles also are general and indeterminate, and susceptible of different senses.** *Tantumne rem tam negligenter!* Do we say the articles are as indeterminate as the declaration, with which you would have us contented, or any thing like it? you know we do not: you know it cannot be said with any color of truth. You know you propose the declaration because it is *general*, and to get rid of subscription to the articles because it is *too determinate*. It is shamefully insolent to think of putting us off with so slight an answer. You have lengthened out at will digression upon digression through the whole of your book. Surely; now you are coming to the end of it, you should at last, once for all, fairly look in the face of what you must have been sensible from the first is our principal argument against your main scheme, and strive to make some reply that will bear hearing. I have dwelt so long and so much on this head, that I need not do it again: and shall therefore only observe, that you have done the only thing you could; observed the orator's rule, when a difficulty cannot be solved, either to say nothing upon it, or

adhibere

* Confess. p. 384.

*adhibere quandam in dicendo speciem atque pompam, et pugnae similem fugam.**

It would of course be perceived, sooner or later, that your favorite declaration alone was not sufficient. Subscription, when added, gave it a different force. After a person had declared what he took to be the sense of scripture in the most necessary points, an engagement that he would make it the rule of his teaching and acting carried in it some good security. Till then, it was, in comparison, of very little weight.

*There is indeed, as you say, something in this single declaration, which amounts to an acknowledgment of the divine authority of the scriptures.** And you introduce from Dr. Hartley a doubt, whether subscribing, and consequently declaring, even thus much, is not overdoing. But *this you think is spinning the thread too fine.* I wonder you should. For, according to your notions, what church hath a right to require more of any candidate, than to say, that he is a Christian? on what do you ground such right? and particularly why do you impose upon him a necessity of assenting to so enslaving a proposition, as Dr. Hartley conceives it to be, that the scripture is the word of God? I have already observed to you, that this could not be the original confession of gospel-faith. And though you have endeavoured to defend it against him as a safe one; I know not whether, if he were living, he would acquiesce in your sentiments. But surely he would not acknowledge it to be an authorized one. By what authority can you require a man to believe the books of the Old and New Testament generally received among Christians? what if he should reject one or more books, or parts of books, out
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* Cic. de Orat. II. 72.

■ Confess. p. 385.

of the usual canon? He may yet be a good Christian! You therefore seem willing, that the subscriber should pitch upon what copy or canon he will.* Suppose then that he adds the *Apostolical Constitutions* to the canon; would you allow him to introduce all the offices, doctrines, ceremonies, directed there? Suppose, on the contrary, that, with the author of a book, intitled, *The morality of the new Testament digested under various heads*, printed in quarto, 1765, who calls himself in the title, *a rational Christian*, he should hold, that every passage in it is forged which contains any miraculous fact, or doctrine of mere revelation: would you allow such a person for a teacher? Are you willing then to retreat, with Dr. Hartley, this one step further back? And when you have done that, whom will you allow to be called Christians? Some have accounted the Mahometans a Christian sect. There is an authentick instrument in the archbishop's library at Lambeth, in which a number of English Socinians apply to the emperor of Morocco and his subjects as their brethren in the faith. Others have doubted of other sects whether they were Christians or not. Settling these points may give employment to more new Confessionalists than one. But I beg you to consider, sir, why will you lay yourself open to such questions? why give delight to papists and infidels by such extravagancies? They wish no better than that we should find no place for the sole of our foot. And doubtless there are difficulties in fixing fundamentals. But this is surely a reason, not for running wildly into any extremity that presents itself, but for laboring to agree in *words of truth*

* P. 387.

truth and soberness. I hope your readers will feel this : I wish you may.

Indeed you seem, after writing so much and so warmly, not quite to have determined your own plan. You think somewhat favorably of the scheme, that *the candidate should deliver the articles of his faith in a form of his own, because he best knows his own conceptions.*^y But the intent of subscription is, that others may know them : that the bishop, the congregation, the publick, may be acquainted with them. And is it the best way to this, that he should deliver them in words, of which few of them will ever hear any thing ; and which they who do hear them cannot have time enough to consider fully ; and which may be satisfactory to some of them, and not to others ? But this, it is alledged, was the ancient way.^z But why should it be retained or restored, after it had been found, as it must be, inconvenient ? But you would have it used only for a limited time, and by elder divines. For what time, and by divines of what age, you do not tell us. And it comes out at last, that you want it to be tried, only to disgrace it by the confusion which it must introduce.

You object against *any peremptory assent to articles as agreeable to the word of God*, that it seems *absolutely inconsistent* with the candidate's carrying on the study of the scriptures, as he promises in the ordination office.^a Surely it cannot be *absolutely inconsistent*, unless, what you will scarcely allow, our articles contain *all* the truths of the gospel. But, with respect to the articles, why may not his further study of the scripture confirm, rather than weaken, his assent to them ? Or, if it should have the contrary effect, there is no incon-

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sistence

^y Confess. p. 388.

^z P. 389.

^a Confess. p. 390.

sistence between his assenting to them at one time, and dissenting from them afterwards; though there is one between his dissenting from them, and pretending to go on teaching agreeably to them.

The modesty of the term, *I am* PERSUADED *that the scriptures contain all things required of necessity, &c.* pleases you extremely.^b But if the persuasion be a firm and steady one, as I hope you would have this be, where is the difference between being *persuaded* of a truth, and *assenting* to it? Peremptory assent, whatever it means, is a phrase of your own. But you say this persuasion concerning scripture may be obtained with *a thousandth part of the pains necessary* to prove that our articles are agreeable to it. And with much less pains it certainly may. Whether with a thousandth part, neither I nor you know how to calculate. But is this any evidence, that no further declaration should be required? If it be, the mere declaration, that there is a God, would be best of all. For the knowledge of that may be obtained with abundantly less pains still.

You go on to an anecdote in the life of Dr. Prideaux, that Dr. Busby would have founded a catechetical lecture in each university for the instruction of the undergraduates: but that both universities rejected it:^c on which you make many reflections. Concerning the fact, I can only say, that no wonder if a proposal was rejected, which, according to your account of it, would have subjected every candidate for a bachelor's degree to the will and pleasure of Dr. Busby's catechist, whether he should obtain it or not: nay, I dare say, you yourself would be much better pleased, that the candidates should have no instruction

^b P. 390, 391.

^c Confess. p. 392.

struction at all, than such as Dr. Busby's institution would have procured them. For the rest, I believe much more care is taken, both in preparing and examining young persons for orders, than you insinuate: and I wish much more still were taken: but what is all this to the business of your book?

Indeed you represent the design of it so differently yourself in different parts, that it may seem difficult to ascertain it. But I think few, if any, of your readers will come to the conclusion of it without being satisfied that your aim is to destroy our whole ecclesiastical establishment. I earnestly entreat them therefore to ask themselves, whether they are willing to follow you all your lengths? And not answer hastily, till they have coolly considered what a prodigious change the accomplishment of your plan would make in the constitution of this country. The clergy will do well to reflect, what prospect they will have, when once this great machine is set to work, of obtaining the things they wish, and avoiding those which they may fear. The people in general are concerned to be aware, that, in proportion as it makes a progress, the influence of the crown, and the balance of power in the nation, must be vastly altered; many millions of property put into different, and who knows what, hands: a large part of our system of laws repealed, and new ones enacted in their stead: patronages must be at an end, our universities totally new modelled, and who can tell how? the union with Scotland broken, a fundamental condition of which is preserving two established churches in their present state: the whole face of religious profession and publick worship must not only undergo a grand variation at the first; but be varying afterwards continually,

for want of something to check it; which an established church doth very greatly, without the least use of force; because a mere publick leading will be followed by the generality, if such writers as you will let them alone. It will be said perhaps that all this may be pleaded against overturning a popish establishment. And part of it may, though by no means all. But is there the same need of destroying a protestant one, as of substituting it in the place of a popish one?

And you, sir, would do well to consult yourself, whether a proposal, big with such consequences, be a modest one for you (whoever you are) to make. Perhaps you expect only a small part of it to take effect: and perhaps none may. But will it be for your honor to have proposed so much, and have it treated with total disregard in point of practice? And to have discovered so much rancor in yourself, and thrown so much unjust reproach on others, for nothing? And if any attempt of putting it in practice in any particular should be made, can you tell which that will be, and how far it will go? Your pretence is, that the church of England is leaning towards popery: and there never was a more groundless one. But will it not rather discourage that church's opposition to popery, to see the protestants of this stamp deserting and reviling her, and intent upon her destruction? Would not a friendly communication and explanation be of more use against the common enemy?

Our dissenters also may do well to consider, how far they may be affected by your scheme. The church of England is a great support to many doctrines, which the orthodox dissenters respect. Especially in that important doctrine, to unsettle which is a great, if not the principal, design

design of your book. They and we are harmoniously united, and have joined our endeavours in support of it when attacked publickly. Thus, in the year 1719, the London ministers observed, ' This is no part of the controversy between the nonconformists and the national church, and therefore, in this our *common* cause, we affect not to act separately from them . . . whatever may be pretended; this is not a controversy about some metaphysical abstract notions, of personality, subsistence, modal distinctions in the divine nature; in these there will always be room left for different speculations and sentiments.— But it is a controversy about the very object of religious worship . . . the articles of faith we defend, are such as the nation openly declares for, and what we have solemnly subscribed in courts of publick record, when we received the privilege of a publick indulgence, and had long before that time embraced, upon a full conviction from the word of God.' Overturning the church of England will hurt these doctrines: and it certainly as much concerns the dissenters now, to discourage open attacks against our common faith, as it did in 1719. The clergy of the church of England in general are friends to whatever the dissenters enjoy by law; and where the dissenters have not qualified themselves according to law, few, if any, of the clergy have attempted to give them any trouble about it, or are disposed to do so; truly wishing well to as much toleration, as the welfare of the state will permit. In these circumstances, it would be neither generous nor equitable to attack the church, or oppose any reasonable

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request

* The Doctrine of the blessed Trinity stated and defended, Introd. p. 1, 2, 14, 7, 8.

request of the clergy, merely because they are not in favor with a dissolute age, and so an advantage may be safely taken against them. Yet what perpetual instances of this kind of bitterness do we see in the news-papers? I neither say, nor think, that all or most part of these things come from the dissenters: probably the greatest part of them comes from such as have little more love for the dissenters than for us. But as dissenters will unavoidably be suspected for part, would they not do well to clear themselves by some publick marks of candor to the church of England? Why might not the dissenters say, that the principles of liberty as much require the Episcopalians in New England to have bishops there, as the Presbyterians and Congregationalists to have Presbyters? Perhaps they may think it prudent, not only to say nothing in our favor, at home or abroad, but to join the cry against us. I will not think this is possible, among the serious and considerate; as we have not deserved it, and as the common faith is interested in the support of the church of England. Besides, persons really prudent will consider, that human affairs are subject to great vicissitudes: that though the common run of talking and writing at present is not to the advantage of the establishment, there doth not appear in the body of the people any spirit which betokens its downfall: that should the dissenters, presuming on the contrary, throw themselves into the scale of those who wish it, so ungenerous a behaviour may excite indignation: and though God forbid that we should retaliate upon them any ill usage, yet God only knows, to what behaviour vehement provocation may carry men.

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If the dissenters, or any considerable part of them, really desire an union with the church of England, on any such terms as they imagine we can grant, they may easily find proper persons and means to signify it. But indeed they must be sensible, that many of them have made it much more difficult, by changes of opinions amongst themselves, since the revolution, than it was before. If they think this union impracticable, yet why should they consider men of no religion, or of romantick notions in religion, as their friends; and treat serious and moderate clergymen as their enemies?

Your book is said to be a favorite one amongst the dissenters: some, I doubt not, are pleased with any thing which will set us on disputing amongst ourselves. But would the old dissenters really wish, that the doctrinal articles, which they have always so highly esteemed, should be set aside, and clergymen ordained without assenting to them, or doing any thing equivalent? would they themselves receive ministers without knowing any thing more of their faith, than that they profess to believe the Bible? If they would not, why should we? Nay, would not many persons of much greater latitude than they, think that this was setting the gate too wide open? And that you have gone further into one extreme than we are in the other? Is not shutting out *some*, whom perhaps we need not, safer than letting in *all*? The dissenters may come to some terms with the genuine members of the established church: but you, fond as you are of complimenting them, will keep no measures with them; as they must see, if they examine into the depths of your scheme. They must lay themselves bare without defence, else they will be as liable to a

new Confessional, as we are to the present: This indeed you have taken great pains to hide: but it peeps out perpetually. And if serious persons of either communion come once to consider the consequences, you will have little room left to boast of the reception which your book hath met with amongst them, how much soever it may continue to be applauded by those who delight in mischief.

In your postscript, I do not understand for what end Dr. Anthony Ellys is mentioned; though it is surprising that his tracts should be totally neglected by a writer on spiritual liberty. But in the place where you have introduced him, nothing is asserted, but that he *was a bishop, and he knew what was right and just, as well as Dr. Anthony Sparrow.*[†] If this was all you meant, the information hath no pertinence to your subject. If you would insinuate more, the friends of Bp. Ellys are at a loss to know what it is; and wish you had been more explicit, and quoted the passage, if you thought he had advanced any weak argument or mistaken fact; that it might appear, whether such false reasoning or mistake had inadvertently escaped so able a man, or been wrongly, though I hope without ill design, charged upon him.

Before I take my leave of you, I think it incumbent on me to inform you, that the MS. letters of Abp. Wake, which I have quoted in his defence, are the property, partly of the Dean and chapter of Christchurch in Oxford, and partly of the Rev. Mr. Beauvoir of Canterbury. The other MSS. and books I think I have referred to in their places. The last words of Dr. Du Moulin are in a printed pamphlet, quarto, containing

[†] Postscript, p. 408.

containing 19 pages, printed for Rôyston, 1680, in the Bodley Library at Oxford.

If, in the course of the letters, any suspicions or charges have dropped from my pen beyond the grounds you have given me for them, or beyond what Christian charity would allow me to urge, I am sorry for them, ask your pardon, and wish them unsaid. But where deliberate malice and willful falshood have appeared in your book, I avow my disapprobation of them. To your person as a Christian brother, at least in confidence that you are so, I wish every happy and prosperous event, and, as one mean of procuring them, permit me to wish you adorned with some of those virtues, evident in the characters which you have commended in your Confessional. The *learned Cartwright* (p. 21.) will teach you ‘seriously to lament the unnecessary trouble you have caused in the church, by fomenting schism; and to testify to the world the dislike of your former ways.’ With *the memorable Hales*, may you ‘resolve now, to be orthodox, and declare yourself a true son of the church of England, both for doctrine and discipline.’ You agree with Le Clerc in professing an apostolical Christianity, (p. 33.) acknowledge then with him ‘episcopal government to be of apostolical institution; and that it is very wicked to attempt destroying it, to establish Presbyterianism, Fanaticism or Anarchy in its stead.’ Let the puritans, whom you so highly favor through all your performance, engage you with them, to consent in the doctrinal articles with the church of England, and to abjure the Arian heresy. And

* Life of Whitgift, p. 554.

† Heylin’s Life of Laud, p. 340.

‡ Biblioth. Christ. T. xx. P. ii. p. 599.

with Dr. Du Moulin, to whose invectives you refer us, p. 249, for proof, that several of our most celebrated divines indeavoured to bring in popery, may you, before you lie on your bed of languishing, which an upbraiding conscience will make much more uneasy, be sensible and acknowledge, that ‘ when you mixed those personal
 ‘ reflections you vented too much of your own
 ‘ passion and bitterness ; humbly begging God,
 ‘ and those you have wronged, pardon for Jesus
 ‘ Christ’s sake : and while desirous that those
 ‘ divines would have charity and tenderness for the
 ‘ dissenters,’ at the same time ‘ intreat the
 ‘ dissenters that they would have a due regard and
 ‘ respect to those of the church of England :’
 with many of whom in his last hours he wished,
 ‘ Let my soul be with theirs!’* If you cannot yet be induced to do them so much justice, common decency and gratitude should restrain you from making illiberal returns to your benefactors. When your patrons have given you a preference to others, and the church, at your own request, hath admitted you to her emoluments, on a persuasion that you were as willing as able to teach those doctrines, which the church judges, according to the gospel, necessary to be believed and expedient to be taught, and which the state meant to encourage by her appointments ; of what spirit must you be, that can complain of this preference as a violence offered you, and reproach your benefactors as doing every thing hard and injuriously by you, but forcing the pen into your hand, and compelling you to sign your name, *à coups de baton*? p. 196. Surely, sir, you were at liberty to decline the offer. And if you could not in conscience comply with the conditions, which were neither
 new

* *Last Words*, p. 11.

new nor unknown to you, you ought, as an honest man, to have declined it, with thanks for the preference given you: not to accept it against your conscience, and then abuse your patron and the church by a groundless and malicious charge of *imposition*. Nay, even now, it is not too late to try an experiment: take up your pen once more, freely and voluntarily, and offer the resignation of your office and profits together: see who will do all but take up the *baton* to deprive you of your liberty in this case. But if you either have deceitfully obtained them, to gratify your avarice or ambition, by promising to perform the conditions which you determined not to fulfill; or if, designing to fulfill them at first, you became afterwards persuaded, that fulfilling them was unlawful, and yet resolved to keep possession of what you had gotten by means of them; on which side, think you, lies the imposition? Hath the church *imposed* upon you, or you upon the church? And if, on the contrary, you are convinced of your errors, and will conscientiously, for the future, discharge your engagements, according to the talents with which God hath blessed you, I shall rejoice in every accumulation of honor you may obtain to reward your merit, being,

REVEREND SIR,

Your sincere well wisher,

in the truth of the gospel, &c.

POST-

P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE my third letter went to the press, I have received the information which I had desired in my second, with respect to the Declaration prefixed to the articles, whether it were originally set out by K. James the first, or Charles the first. For the ready communication of this knowledge I return my hearty thanks to the learned gentleman who gave it. And I as freely communicate it to you, as you express a desire of satisfaction in this point, (Confess. p. 131, note.) He mentions several authorities from cotemporary writers, such as Hammond on God's Grace and Decrees, Prynne's Canterbury's Doom, and Abp. Laud's Speech in the star-chamber. And to what I had said from Heylin, at page 146 of my second letter, he says, I might have added, that he refers to the *Bibliotheca Regia*, a collection of some of the king's (Charles the first's) works; in which *Remains of the king*, the Declaration was published, 1649. And that it was *his own*, not another's confirmed by him, was the judgement of Dr. Pearson, who was about sixteen years old in 1628. In his answer to Dr. Burgess's *Word by way of post-script*, preserved in the *Bibliotheca scriptorum ecclesie Anglicanae*, published 1709, p. 379. 'As for your expression,' says he, 'of the Declaration FATHERED on the late king, . . . I believe you cannot prove but that Declaration was his own, as much as any other declaration was his, or any king's.' And he implies, it was not only asserted but framed and penned by himself: and affirms, that the Declaration was not printed so early

ly as 1624, which was the last year of K. James.
 ' I beseech you therefore,' says he, (p. 380.)
 ' acknowledge the Declaration to be the king's,
 ' as Mr. Burton did; and say not that it was *fa-*
 ' *thered* upon that blessed martyr, which Mr.
 ' Burton himself would not endure.' He vindicates it, you see, as King Charles's own, with respect to the *framing*, as well as *setting it forth*. This gentleman then proceeds to writers of a later date, who ascribe it to Charles the first, as Collier, Bingham, Kennet, Puller, Neale, Anthony Collins, and Sparrow. But the general assent, and King Charles's calling it our Declaration, and there being no copy of it ever mentioned before 1628, would be sufficient to ascertain it, if no occasion of doubt appeared on the other side. You indeed say, it is *more generally believed to have been first published by King James the first*.^a But to prove this *more general belief*, you mention only Dr. Nicholls, who, in one column, calls it James the first's, though even he, in the second column of the same page, calls it Charles the first's. You confirm yourself in your opinion, from observing, that, in the Declaration, which Dr. Nicholls ascribes to Charles, mention is made of the bishop of Chester's judgement, which appears not in the present Declaration: whence you would infer that the present Declaration is not king Charles's. It is strange, that no copy of the present Declaration, if it was King James's, should be found or heard of in his reign: and that if King Charles put one forth, containing the bishop of Chester's judgement, no such copy should have ever been seen from that time to this. The gentleman before-mentioned concurs in opinion with me, that the mistake is owing to the editor's inaccurate publication of Dr. Nicholls's

^a Confess. p. 125.

cholls's unfinished MS. The doctor draws a conclusion from a fact mentioned in the Declaration :
 ' If *even in those curious points, in which the present differences lie, men of all sorts take the articles of the church of England to be for them*'
 — The fact, taken from the words of the Declaration, is properly printed in Italicks: then follows the doctor's conclusion from it, which, in correspondence to the ' If ' that begins the sentence, should have been expressed in Roman characters — ' then may be inferred, what the right reverend bishop of Chester hath said.' The conclusion is subjoined in the bishop's own words, ' *this rather gives a testimony,*' &c. And this is proved to be the case, from discovering who the bishop of Chester was, whose words are here quo.ed. This was no other than the fore-mentioned Dr. Pearson; in whose *No necessity of reformation*, &c. at page 343 of the *Bibloth. Script. Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, occurs this sentence : ' And so the exception no way infers the doubtfulness of the doctrine, but *rather gives a testimony of the great wisdom and moderation of the church, which, in points doubtful and controverted, hath propounded only that which, with no sober man, can be matter of doubt, or subject of controversy :*' Which are the very words quoted by Dr. Nicholls, and which could never have been quoted in any Declaration of King Charles the first, being not published before the year 1660.

Thus the *only* authority you urge is shewn clearly to be a mistake : but you say it is *more generally* believed to be King James's. One would think you had *many* to produce ; this gentleman hath acquainted me with *two*, and I know of no more : if you are not aware that there are two on your side, for you do not mention them, I will as ingenuously

genuously refer you to them, as he hath referred me. They are Bp. Gibson and Dr. Burn. These indeed the learned correspondent takes for one only, as he supposes the latter to copy from the former.

The bishop says, (Codex, p. 325. Vol. I. Edit. 1761. note) ‘ This body of articles was
 ‘ not only passed in convocation, and confirmed
 ‘ by royal authority, in the year 1562, but was
 ‘ also ratified anew, first by Queen Elizabeth, and
 ‘ afterwards by King James the first.’ He then gives us Queen Elizabeth’s confirmation, and afterwards King James’s ; which he makes to be the Declaration now standing before the articles. But my learned informer adds, ‘ The good bishop
 ‘ is undoubtedly mistaken.’ For, though he allows the assertion, that King James the first ratified the articles as well as Queen Elizabeth, yet he disallows his proof with respect to the Declaration, and says, it was by ratifying the Canons made in 1603. For his authority, he produces Lord Coke ; who, (Part 4th of his Institutes, Edit. 1648, p. 323.) says to this purpose, subscription was required by the clergy, both *by act of parliament* confirming and establishing the XXXIX Articles of religion agreed upon at a convocation, and ratified by Queen Elizabeth under the great seal of England : and *by Canons* of the church of England made and ratified by King James.—The marginal note referred to at the word, *Canons*, informs us, they were made *at a convocation begun at London, Anno Domini 1603, 1. James.* And then follow the three articles in the 36th Canon.

This, I think, must determine the question, beyond farther dispute, whose the Declaration was ? as the earliest copy yet discoverable is that of 1628. At least no one hath any authority to call it King James’s,

James's, till he can produce, or direct us to a copy of it put forth in the reign of that King.

Give me leave to add, that the just quoted words of Lord Coke shew his opinion to have been, that the whole XXXIX Articles were established by the act of parliament of Queen Elizabeth. He was born in 1550, and so was 21 years of age when the act passed, and was conversant in law matters from his earliest days.

I have likewise acknowledgements to make of other informations, conveyed in not quite so civil a manner, by *Occasional Remarks* lately published: the production, if I may presume to guess, not of any of your *Auxiliaries*, however numerous, but of your own pen, who can multiply yourself into an army, by assuming various forms, to make your attacks more terrible. Alas, what is to become of me, fated singly to sustain so alarming a confederacy, while there advance against me

Magnum
Agmen agens Clausus, Magnique IPSE agminis instar.

Indeed the courtesy of the remarker, whoever he is, gives me a Dwarf, as *inlisted under my standard, partly to bear a part of my light armour.*^b But that Dwarf, as he calls him, had erected a standard of his own before he knew any thing of mine: a standard which the *Oc. Remarker* will not be easily able to take. I return that gentleman thanks for the pleasure, which his ingenious performance gave me; *ridentem dicere verum Quid vetat?* Yet, to shew the vanity of my adversary's conjecture, who, extremely like yourself, takes the liberty of supposing what he pleases, without any proof, or just grounds of suspicion, truth obliges me to deny

^b *Oc. Rem.* p. 18.

deny any confederacy with him, or even knowledge, or so much as guess who he is. You, however, and your friends, may do well to recollect, that the same genius to which we ascribe the *Batrachomyomachia*, could when he pleased write an *Iliad*.

As for myself, I am introduced as a *stalking Terræ filius, exhibiting my defiance*.^c Let this pass for an ornament amongst others akin to it. But possibly the reader may wonder at the culling such a flower, by the equally nameless, and much more censorious, Confessionalist and his new ally.

Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?

The Remarker charges me with representing the concessions and alterations in King Charles the second's Declaration concerning ecclesiastical affairs,^a imperfectly. I was not concerned to state all the concessions and alterations in that Declaration, but to shew, that the complication of sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence, which you charge on the part of the orthodox, relating to the Savoy conference, hardly to be paralleled in popish history,^b did indeed rather belong to the presbyterian commissioners. In order to shew this, I reduced the several particulars in debate to three general points: church government; the English liturgy; rites, ceremonies, and ecclesiastical habits: in which points the King had made concessions, 25th of October 1660. Had the King made ever so many more concessions, not noticed by the commissioners; or had he subdivided these into ever so many particulars, reducible to one or other of these generals; I was not obliged minutely to consider every one of those subdivisions. It was sufficient for me to shew, that, in the three

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^a Ibid.

^b Ibid.

^c Confess. Pref. p. xxix.

chief points conceded by the King, to one or other of which every thing objected to by the petitioners, or debated in the conference, was reducible, the presbyterian commissioners were most guilty of those crimes which you charge on the orthodox. I did not mean to load one side, and acquit the other intirely. I expressed my wish, that more had been granted by the church-commissioners. And indeed it is to be lamented by all ingenuous minds, that the spirit of peace did not breathe more powerfully on both sides. Such ingenuouſness you have nowhere discovered through your book: and in this instance I undertook to shew your very partial and unjust representation of the persons concerned in the disputes at that time: which having done sufficiently, I had no business to go on. But if the Remarker chuses to do it, I am not afraid to attend him. I have no apprehensions that *the bulwark of subscriptions should be removed*, by any thing mentioned in the King's declaration, or the subsequent conference. The Declaration does not REMOVE, but FIX *the bulwark of subscription*, as enjoined by parliament: though it excuses, for the interval, the subscription required by the Canon: and in the conference, the presbyterians object nothing to *subscribing the articles*; but to the enjoined use of rites, ceremonies, and habits, prescribed by the liturgy, and to the having them more bound upon them by *subscription, according to the 36th Canon*. And if some of them understood the King to mean that he would dispense with the laws, it was not the bishops only, but the judges, during the interval, and the parliament afterwards, who disapproved of it.^a

^a Oe. Rem. p. 18.

^b Ibid.

^c Collier's Eccles. Hist. Vol. II. p. 276.

letters, to save him further trouble in this inquiry, I will acquaint him, that I abide by the system of the church of England, as now improved by a free toleration. But perhaps what was intended for the proof of my inconsistency follows: *Sometimes he reproves the author of the Confessional, with magisterial severity, as too much a friend to the dissenters, ONLY for exposing the iniquity of their ancient persecutors. On other occasions he seems disposed to coax the dissenters in a way that puts one in mind of, If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, &c.* Where is the inconsistency of my reproving you for your partiality and unjust aggravations of what their adversaries did at that time, in obedience to the laws, without mentioning any of the illegal and iniquitous provocations then given on the other side, with my sincere approbation of the present legal indulgence granted to dissenters? and let me ask further, whether his representing the last as an hypocritical disposition to *coax the dissenters*, be an exercise of that charity, which your friend the reviewer recommends? and whether that friend ever saw fewer instances of such charity, or more breaches of it, in any writer, than in the author of the Confessional?

In the remainder of this, and in the following page, the Remarker attempts to overpower me by a continual firing of questions at me.

Who——would contend with a man, who, at this time of the day, shews an inclination to support the narrow-hearted, and more than semipagan, notion, of religion, entertained by the convocation-men in 1689?

Why may not I, at any time of the day, support even convocation-men, as far as they can with truth be supported, against the extravagant imputations of the author of the Confessional? and

what proof hath the Remarker to give, that I have done more? *Did I not, said misappos illu*
In what way can you deal, or upon what common principles can you argue, with a pretended defender of a Protestant church, who either is, or pretends to be, ignorant of the master-argument against popery?
 How can the Remarker accuse me of this, when I have not said a word of the *real* master-argument, only of what you called so, but did not specify what it was; which yet I guessed to be something against the constitution of our own church; and believe I have not guessed wrong.
Is it worth while to hold debate with a man, who quarrels with you for calling the nonconformists of Abp. Parker's time by the name of puritans, after so good an authority as Strype? Might I not, without quarrelling with you, ask, whether you meant to include the Presbyterians among the puritans in Abp. Parker's time; or observe to you, that there was a difference between them at that time; for that the Presbyterians communicated with the church of England, which the puritans refused to do; and that the Presbyterians condemned the puritans for their separation? Where shall we find peaceable conference, if this be quarelling?
Or with a man, who while he is correcting your historical errors, speaks of two bishops, one of whom died while the other was a school-boy, as one and the same man? Here, sir, I stand reprov'd; and return thanks for the information, though conveyed in no gentler terms than those of the Remarker. But is it all lost time and pains to hold debate, on important points, with a man who can be guilty of such mistakes? And can this be objected with any decency by a vindicator of the Confessional against the Letter-writer? You had

So that assent to the XXXIX Articles, by virtue of the 13. Eliz. c. 12. was still insisted upon, and the next parliament plainly understood that statute as requiring subscription to them all : as hath been observed by Dr. Rutherford ; and is further evident from the 17th and 19th sections ; in which, heads of Colleges and Halls, and Lecturers, are bound to subscribe *the XXXIX articles*. Would not incumbents of parishes in general have been bound at the same time to subscribe them all, if it had not been understood by the legislature, that they were *before* obliged to subscribe them all ?

But, even supposing you had proved a *limitation* intended, which you have not done, nor will ever be able to do ; still the Remarker's defence of you had been a very false one : who *insists upon it, that those gentlemen who have accused the author of the Confessional of attempting to subvert the church of England à fundamentis, ONLY for proposing to have the canonical subscription to the XXXIX Articles taken away, are widely mistaken.* For you do not propose to have *ONLY* canonical subscription taken away, but *all* subscription. You expressly declare, that your *disquisition was intended to prevale on our present governours to remove the yoke of ESTABLISHED CONFESSIONS AS TESTS OF ORTHODOXY.** Is this taking away *ONLY* canonical subscription ? When you complain of *establishing these explications as tests of orthodoxy, as a great misfortune, by requiring ministers to subscribe them, as an indispensable condition of admitting them to the pastoral office,*¹ is not this levelled against *parliamentary* subscription, as well as canonical ? when you censure our *establish-*

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¹ O. R. p. 17.

* Confess. p. 16.

¹ Confess. p. 17.

ed. confessions of faith as unchristian impositions;^m and assert, that all subscription to articles of faith, and religious doctrines, conceived in unscriptural terms, and enforced by publick authority, are utterly unwarrantable,ⁿ is this ONLY a proposal to take away subscription to rituals; is it not equally against a subscription to doctrines? And when the church of England hath laid, as *her foundations*, the scriptures and the three creeds,^o is not your endeavour to render those scriptures uncertain, by permitting them to be wrestled at will; and representing those creeds as unwarrantable impositions, nay as *absurd*, and *nonsense*, a manifest and avowed attempt to subvert the church of England *à fundamentis*? If then you have given the Remarker authority to make this defence for you, here is a specimen, not only of artifice, but of something much worse: and I do, in sober sadness, and with as much solemnity as you please, reprove you both for your disingenuity.^p

I am next charged with inconsistency, as *wanting to be reconciled to myself*. How so? Why, *he deals chiefly in bye-matters, and these he treats in a bye-way of his own.*^q Now if this be intended as a proof of inconsistency, I acknowledge my inability to understand it. If it be a new charge, I leave my vindication to yourself, who are most concerned in it: for it was my commerce with you that led me to deal in these bye-matters; and whither should I follow my adversary but into those bye-ways, in which only he is to be found? The bye-way is not *my own*, but *your own*. But he cannot be certain whither I am bound, or by what church-system I will abide: If the Remarker hath not sagacity enough to find out this by my letters,

^m Confess. p. 25.ⁿ P. 26.^o Art. VI. VII. VIII.^p O. R. p. 29.^q O. R. p. 50.

very many learned, rational, pious, liberal-minded, divines, would chuse such a one for their representative. I intirely acquit my reverend brethren of deserving any reproach for making choice of such a one as myself for their advocate, by acknowledging that they did not meet from all parts of the kingdom to chuse me for their representative. Nor do I suppose, though I acknowledge your merit well-deserving such preference, that ever the sectaries and hereticks all over England met together to chuse you *their* representative. This is neither usual nor practicable, on either side. What a very trifler then have I to deal with, that makes the want of such a delegation an objection against me? When a bold invader appears, the *common danger* is commission sufficient to justify every citizen in endeavouring to repel the foe:

*Hostilis cum machina terruit urbem,
Undique concurrunt arcem defendere cives.*

Claud.

And, as the Remarker suggests in his title-page, the *common resentment* furnishes them with weapons for the encounter; if not the properest that might have been chosen, yet, with such as will testify their zeal, and perhaps repel the enemy till more powerful succours arrive. It is indeed an excellent project for the demolition of Christianity, as taught in the church of England, if every enemy of it, on the principles of liberty, might attack it at pleasure, yet none of its friends should be permitted to defend it, till all the clergy of that church should be gathered together to agree in the choice of an advocate-general. However, sir, I have a commission for what I do, from St. Paul and St. Jude; *to strive together for the faith of the gospel;*

gospel; and earnestly to contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints.* Nay, I have an authority which you will certainly think, though not equal to the apostles, yet far superior to my poor pretensions of understanding them, I mean your own; a commission to me signed with your own hand. For in your first edition you permitted me, according to my promise at ordination, to "be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word." And in your second you more expressly confirm it, by saying, "If by *banishing* and *driving away*, no more is meant than opposing to them argument, exhortation, or instruction, undoubtedly, every man safely may promise, and every clergyman ought to perform in this way as much as he is able."

In answer to the civility of the advertisement at the end, I shall only say, that whatever the Remarker or I may think of ourselves or of each other, the world will judge to which the epithet of *brainsick* is most applicable: and that *anxiety for the preservation of ecclesiastical peace*,^a is no more a mark of insanity in scripture, than the characters, *presumptuous are they, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignities*,^a are a description of a sound understanding. If any person, thinking I want a cure, will undertake it with a truly charitable hand, I will thankfully give his medicines a very fair trial: but such treatment of me as the Remarker's is, can serve only to remind me of Job's remonstrance to his friends, *How forcible are right words! but what doth your arguing reprove?*^b I perfectly concur in those sentiments

^a Phil. i. 27.

^a Jude, verse 3.

^x Confess. p. 382, note.

^y O. R. p. 57.

^x Ibid.

^a 2 Pet. xi. 10.

^b Job. vi. 25.

had called Barlow's Account of the Hampton² court conference a farce. I knew the relator to have been a bishop: afterwards, at p. 175, you mention *the learned Bp. Barlow*, and call him *this worthy bishop*: recollecting you had done so, and having never seen the book you quote, I hastily supposed you meant the same man; and fell into a mistake, which a little attention might have prevented. I had no other purpose in it, than an endeavour to discover the meaning of an ambiguous sentence; and presumed, from the above circumstance, that you meant not to represent *Barlow's Account*, but the *conference* itself as a farce. Here was certainly no blameable intention, no wilful mistake made to serve a purpose. And is this so unexampled a fault as to render the writer capable of committing it inexcusable, and unworthy to be debated with? Is the author of the Confessional, whose time is too precious to be laid out on such incorrect writers, himself incapable of committing a mistake through inattention? Did he not confound, in his first edition, Mr. Gay with Mr. Law, because *the book was not then at hand*: and will not my not having the *Genuine Remains* at hand, be as good an excuse for me? Does not one of your advocates, the monthly Reviewer, say, 'It is but justice to acknowledge, that he [the Letter-writer] has pointed out some few mistakes and misrepresentations, which the author of the Confessional is chargeable with, for want of attention or proper information; and which we doubt not but he will have candor enough to acknowledge.' And will not my candor in acknowledging a mistake, from want of attention, when pointed out to me, equally absolve me? Does not even the Oc. Remarker himself acknowledge you guilty of a *palpable mistake*, which the *Doubter* had pointed out: which yet he

thinks sufficiently atoned for, by *venturing to say for you, that had you been apprized of your error, you would readily have acknowledged it, and corrected in the second edition?*^a And will not my as ready acknowledgement of a mistake, as soon as apprized of it, be as meritorious in me? Why then am I so unmercifully treated by the same Remarker for *one slip*, through want of attention, and which carried in it no *incautious imputation* on any man? Doubtless many more may, and have, escaped me; and many more might have been pointed out in the Confessional: but where no unfair design appeared in the mistake, I deemed it unfair to attempt prejudicing the reader against a writer merely for mistakes of inattention. With what face then can the Remarker raise such an outcry against the Letter-writer, and represent him as unworthy to be debated with by an author, whom he permits us to call, in some instances, a *fallible*, and, if you will, a *careless*, in others a *confident* writer.^t

The Remarker's last question is, Is it worth your while to hold debate *with a disputant, who, while he is questioning you with an ingenuous magnanimity, concerning the sincerity of your own subscription, seems not to have any feelings that ever he subscribed himself?* And why should this be suspected, unless he is uncharitable enough to believe, that no man hath any other feelings of having subscribed than those of remorse? Which, although he and you may have, I thank God I have not.

In the same page he charges me with setting myself up as *advocate-general for the clergy of the church of England; and thinks it incredible, that such a respectable body, among whom he trusts are*
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^a O. R. p. 28.

^t P. 11.

ments of an eminent divine, with which the Re-
marker concludes. And among other things I
agree with him in this, that ' When the enemies
' to reason and to religion perceive, that a man
' will not have the courage to defend his opini-
' ons — they never fail to take advantage of
' him, to oppress him, and to run him down,
' well knowing that nothing is necessary to accom-
' plish their purposes beside stubbornness, cla-
' mor, impudence, and violence.' Yet I should
not have opposed your scheme so earnestly, if
I had not seen cause to think, that beside the ex-
treme danger of your introducing by it, perhaps
undesignedly, discord and confusion, you direct-
ly intended it for the means of spreading pernicious
errors: my sincerest wish being, that *mercy*
and truth may meet together; righteousness and peace
*may kiss each other.**

* P. 58.

* P. LXXV. 10.

R. I. N. I. S.



Errors of the Press, which affect the Sense, are thus desired to be corrected; other inaccuracies, especially in the pointing, are left to the Reader's Candor.

- P. 11, L. 6. from the bottom, for *sketches* read *stretch*
 19.—13. for *Calvinists* r. *Arminians*.
 21.—9. before *safety* insert *equal*.
 22.—3. after *but* insert *make use of* *one*.
 23.—23. after *most* insert *men*.
 35.—6. for *wigorous* r. *rigorous*.
 50.—6. for (*by* 13. *Elim.*) r. (*that of the Convocation at last*).
 57.—18. for *church* r. *puritans*.
 61.—23. for *inserting* r. *insert*.
 63.—penult. for *Apb.* r. *Abp.*
 77.—1. for *think* r. *think*.
 — 9. for *was it* r. *were they*.
 79.—13. *controverted* r. *controverted*.
 80.—4. from the bottom, for *rised* r. *wrised*.
 83.—4. for *Apb.* r. *Abp.*
 96.—16. for *put* r. *put*.
 123.—13. after or insert *so*.
 131.—6. from the bottom, for *representative* r. *representative*.
 132.—10. for *individual* r. *individual*.
 136.—21. for *not be* r. *keep us from being*.
 145.—23. *dele* *that*.
 150.—7. for *disurbad* r. *disurbad*.
 171.—23. for *Dr. Burgess's word* r. *Dr. Burgess*.